Week ending April 18 1959

JOHN BULL

ILLUSTRATED

EVERY WEDNESDAY 4½d

THE REBEL BARON

Lord Altrincham

STAY YOUNG LONGER:

THE HOCUS-POCUS WIZARDS

Robert Krepps's great novel of African violence: **EARTHSHAKER**

'ERNIE'S'

Happy Snap Album

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Mr. Sid Cox, *another £1000 winner, was nagged into buying a bond by his mother.*

Mr. Brian Camp, *of Meopham, Kent, put some of his £1000 winnings to work, bought van and cultivators.*

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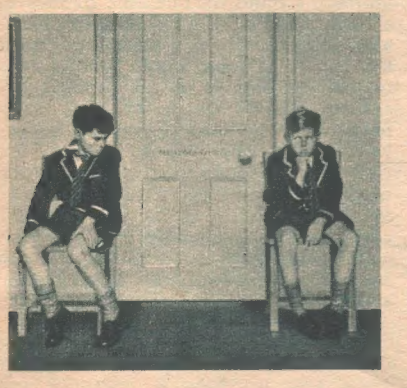
The Cover



IT'S no consolation for these two to remember what every schoolboy learns the hard way—that the patient man behind that door has two remedies for unofficial fisticuffs. There'll be the ultimate deterrent in swishy canes (now costing ratepayers elevenpence each) or a bout in the gym with large gloves and the coach watching out for clutching in the clinches. But the suspense is part of the punishment. Even Chittock doesn't know which way his cover headmaster is going to jump.

Free Speech

JOHN BULL ILLUSTRATED pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post, and in our feature, "We Advise."

Stars And Swipes

THE Americans have their faults, but there is one trait of theirs which I find most refreshing. That is their extreme reluctance to bow down to red-tape and petty dictators.

Often I've heard of Americans threatening to "bust the nose" of some tinpot who tries to push them about.

It's a great pity we are so inhibited. There are at least two people who try to make life intolerable for me—one is the sour-faced bus conductor on my local route and the other is the caretaker of my office building. Both are obstructive, nasty, unhelpful, downright rude—and it would give me the greatest pleasure to ask them both to "step outside."

I don't suppose I ever will. But a national campaign to have a go at these twerps would find me in there swinging. Meanwhile I envy the Americans.—S. T. SINCLAIR, Guildford, Surrey.

A Time To Rest

Life's social customs, obligations and niceties can be hard taskmasters. At seventy I suddenly found myself free from them all.

Nobody expected me to attend a party if the weather was bad, nor did I have to organize a return party if I didn't feel like it.

My life carried no debts of service and if I wanted to sit quietly at home I was free to do so with a clear conscience. This began a new phase in my life—that of complete mental and physical freedom.

I liked it, and still do. There is no other phase quite like it, for I have learned that we all tend to lean rather heavily on each other.—MRS. E. HUMPHREYS, Weston Street, Birmingham, 7.

Curtain Colours

How is it that manufacturers can produce toilet towels in beautiful, vivid colours which never fade, although continually washed and boiled, yet curtain materials do not stand up to wear nearly so well?

How I wish that the towels now on sale, with their bright and lasting colours, could be used as curtains! — MRS. BELLE HALLIWELL, Wellfield Road, Preston, Lancs.

"It's the sun, not washing, that fades colours," says a home expert. "However, there is curtain material now on sale with colours which are guaranteed to last."

What A Neck!

An American friend of mine told me recently that, attracted by a bright array of striped ties—now all the rage in Germany—he went into a shop in Bremen to buy one.

He chose a tie which had a modest but attractive combination of colours.

When he got home he was going to put it on when he noticed a slip of paper on the back with the words Royal Air Force.

He says that he has not the nerve to wear it.—H. C., Bremen, West Germany.

Shift Work

While the government congratulates itself on falling unemployment figures, I wonder how often this has been accomplished through the sacrifice of individual citizens.

After a period of unemployment in Devonshire I have taken a post in Kent away from my wife and two children. My rail fare to visit them for a weekend is £3 and I have the additional expense of keeping two establishments. I'm told

I cannot deduct this expense before tax is assessed.

This seems very unfair when business people are allowed to deduct all sorts of expenses, including entertainment.

Could the Ministry of Labour not be authorized to issue free travel vouchers to people compelled to work away from home? This would be much less expensive than paying benefit and assistance to those who do not move. — JOHN BIRKETT, Springwell Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

Love's Message

I thought that I knew all the tricks of courtship until recently when my daughter's boy friend phoned and asked to speak to her.

When I told her who it was she said: "Tell him I don't want to see him again—but not as though you mean it."—MRS. J. WILLIAMS, Sir Thomas White Gardens, Anfield, Liverpool, 15.

School Parade

The ending of conscription ("Free Speech," March 28) is certainly a mixed blessing.

The Army Education Corps has been doing a fine job in re-educating backward conscripts. Boys are still leaving our schools with insufficient education to meet the needs of everyday life.

Now the responsibility for providing such courses must fall on local authorities with the backing of the government. If necessary, legislation should make attendance at one of these special courses compulsory to all who leave school with a very low attainment.—ALAN CLIFFORD, Frobisher Drive, Walcot, Swindon, Wilts.

The Case For Teds

I have met hundreds of teddy boys and their girl friends and I have yet to find any corresponding to the types described by Brian Carney (JOHN BULL ILLUSTRATED, March 14).

The average teddy boy is no worse than anyone else. He is usually a decent, hardworking lad, very often keen on games—a bit of a rough diamond perhaps, but jolly good at heart and easy enough to get on with when he knows one is genuine.

There are hooligans—but I have met with a larger proportion of hooligans among university students.

I would certainly deny that the teddy boy thinks of sex to the exclusion of all else. He may be less hypocritical about it than most. . . .

I have come across cases of teddy boys being "sorted out" by police —but in all cases it happens with young and probably inexperienced constables.

The article suggests that youth clubs could do a great deal for the teddy boy. Usually when he tries to join a club he is told, "We don't want your sort here," or "Go home and change and we'll let you in." Does a change of clothes alter the boy's character?

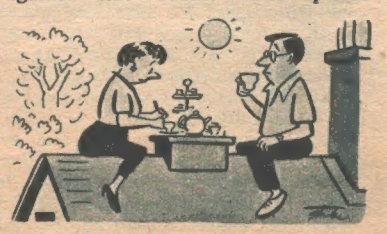
We of the National Association of Teddy Boys are not reformers; we want to give boys an opportunity of showing that the decent majority should not be misjudged by the misdeeds of the few.

A little more understanding on the part of the police, a little help from local authorities and a great deal more tolerance by the general public would do much towards this end.—TREVOR WILLIAMS, Chairman, National Association of Teddy Boys, Birmingham.

On The Level?

My wife and I agreed that our new house should have a flat concrete roof on which we could take tea on hot summer days.

What a shock we received when we found the opposition existing against flat roofs! The prices



quoted by architects were fantastically high—and some builders rejected our plan out of hand.

Does a flat roof create so many costly problems—or is it merely that not enough house purchasers have insisted on the flat roof to make it an economic proposition?—H. D., Aldershot, Hants.

"The main reason for the extra cost is that the roof has to be specially built so that it is waterproof," says the Building Centre.

Malingerer's Check

The B.M.A. says ("Free Speech," March 21) that a doctor would not give information about a patient to a third person and that the certificate is a private matter between doctor and patient.

Yet, when a patient is suspected of malingering the Ministry of National Insurance asks the regional medical officer to examine him. If he decides he is a malingerer, sickness benefit can be stopped.

This procedure can hardly be called a private matter between doctor and patient.—H. S., Stanmore, Middlesex.

"Depending on the length and nature of the disability and the patient's record, examinations of some cases are made by a medical officer of the Ministry of Health," says the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance.

"The private doctor is not required to give any information, except whether the patient is well enough to attend the examination.

"In the year ending 1957, out of 539,900 cases, ten per cent were found to be capable of work, nineteen per cent failed to attend their examinations, disqualifying themselves from benefit for six weeks."

Monte Carlo Fraud

by ROBERT STANDISH

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY NORSTRAND

A RICH, parchment-type envelope came under the door of the Gardenia Suite, which is on the third floor of the Hotel Magnifico in Monte Carlo, with a balcony overlooking the Casino gardens. The only thing wrong with the suite was the price.

The envelope, which contained the hotel bill for the week just ended, was addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Peter Lawson. Peter, who was stretched out on a divan, pretended that he did not see it. Mary Lawson twinkled across the room, retrieved the envelope, opened it and gasped. She was the kind of girl who couldn't help looking lovely, even when gasping. She had amber eyes studded with chips of sapphire, auburn hair not far off red, and she moved like a gazelle. The green satin wrap she wore spoiled nothing.

"Not until after breakfast, darling," said her husband, waving aside the bill she thrust under his nose.

THE breakfast trolley arrived a few seconds later. "Guess how much the bill is," said Mary, when it had gone.

"I'd sooner not guess," said Peter. "How much is it?"

"A little more than one hundred and forty thousand francs," replied Mary, the shadow of worry in her eyes. "That's well over a hundred pounds. What are we going to use for money?"

"I shall have to find some simple fellow to pay it for us," said Peter calmly. "Don't let a little thing like an hotel bill worry you."

"I do so wish," said Mary wistfully, with a faraway look in her eyes, "that you would find an honest job."

"I've never learned how to be honest, my pet. Besides, what honest job would pay for the Gardenia Suite in this gilded trap for the foolish? It's all very well you telling me that *you've* reformed. That just means I have to steal twice as much as before. I can't afford to reform. . . ."

Mary wept prettily. She did everything prettily.

On the extreme, outermost, fuzzy fringe of European society, where these two lived, Peter Lawson had earned for himself the nickname of "Grand Larceny." It was inevitable, therefore, when he married Mary, that she should be known as "Petty Larceny," because in the days before her reformation she had stolen only small things. Like diamonds, for instance.

WHILE Mary was running her bath, Peter made a phone call. "Who were you phoning?" asked Mary, coming into the room as he hung up.

"The Princess Gobolinsky," replied Peter.

"She owns half Texas, doesn't she?" asked Mary excitedly.

"No, my pet, she doesn't. You're thinking of the Princess Golobinsky. *She* owns half Texas. The Princess Gobolinsky doesn't own anything at all except a pair of the darkest, most mysterious eyes I ever gazed into. Which reminds me that you'll have to amuse yourself for an hour or so at cocktail time this evening. I have an appointment with her at six o'clock at Fred's Bar. That will save you the trouble of sleuthing me all over town."

Mary, when Peter had gone out, gave herself over to the luxury of a few tears. Loving Peter as she did, she wondered whether her decision to become a reformed character had been as wise as it had seemed at the time. Peter needed other women as partners in his business, but, she asked herself, was it strictly necessary for them to be so stunningly good-looking? Mary, having chosen the narrow and thorny path of virtue, had no right to complain when she found it was . . . narrow and thorny. Lonely, too.

That evening, sitting alone at a corner table in Fred's Bar, Mary witnessed the meeting between Peter and the Princess Gobolinsky, who was a stunning brunette and whose eyes, as Peter had remarked, were pools of mystery.

And it was plain that she, like most women, couldn't resist Peter's charm when he turned it on. La Gobolinsky, Mary mused bitterly, was evidently one more on the long list. Mary trusted Peter, of course, but she had the philosophy of the desert Arab who, trusting God, sees his camel is tied.

"How old are you?" Mary heard Peter ask La Gobolinsky.

"Twenty-five. Why?" she replied.

"Might be a lucky number," Peter went on. "Let's take a whirl at the roulette wheel."

Mary followed them across the Casino, watched while Peter extracted a 5,000 franc note from a painfully thin bundle, buying with it one 5,000 franc chip. Mary felt better when she saw Peter put it on number thirty-five and better still when the little ivory ball dropped into the slot of number thirty-five and she saw Peter rake in 175,000 francs. La Gobolinsky viewed the phenomenon somewhat sourly, leaving the Casino a few minutes later.

"Gimme!" said Mary when she saw Peter heading towards the "big" roulette table. At least the hotel bill could be paid, giving them another week of breathing space.

Over the next few days, Peter and La Gobolinsky had several meetings, during which a plan of campaign was worked out. It will simplify matters and do no harm if the entire plan is disclosed now. La Gobolinsky had a woman friend, in whose apartment she was living. The friend owned several pictures of extremely dubious authenticity. These had been entrusted to Monsieur Morosco of the Morosco Fine Art Galleries with a view to sale. A receipt had been obtained for them describing one as "reputed to be a Rembrandt," another as a reputed Renoir, and a third as a reputed Toulouse-Lautrec.

IN each case "reputed" was the operative word. The plan was to enhance the value of these three spurious pictures in the eyes of Monsieur Morosco by creating a set of circumstances which would persuade him to believe that they were genuine. The trick itself was, of course, hoary with age and, like all such swindles, depended for its success on a wide streak of larceny in the prospective victim. Morosco seemed an ideal subject.

Since Mary was a reformed character, Peter no longer discussed the details of his operations with her. She *said* that she wanted to know none of the details, which was not strictly true. Otherwise, one must suppose, she would not have spent so much of her time listening to Peter's phone calls on the bathroom extension.

The opening shot of the campaign was fired when La Gobolinsky walked into the Morosco Fine Art Galleries and, waving aside Monsieur Morosco's offers of assistance, proceeded to examine all the pictures on view. "I will be back later," she said at the end of an hour, leaving a visiting card which described her as *La Princesse* Gobolinsky.

If Morosco had examined the finely engraved card with the care it merited, he might have saved himself much heartache and some cash, for he would not have confused Gobolinsky with Golobinsky. The Princess Golobinsky, who was known to be shopping for a villa in or near Monte Carlo, was a refugee from Texas, grown tired of a vast landscape on which oil derricks proliferated to the distant horizon—and all hers. Morosco, thumbing the rich engraving on the card, began to dream. From that moment, Morosco was lost.

Later that day a tall, distinguished stranger entered the Morosco Fine Art Galleries, bowed gravely to the owner and, without a word, began a slow, systematic examination of every picture hanging there.

The tall stranger gave off an aura of wealth and respectability. A combination of many things conspired to create the effect . . . the set of his broad shoulders, his beautifully constructed grey worsted suit, the obviously handmade black shoes and an air of complete assurance only just falling short of arrogance.

BY the end of that hour spent in the galleries, Morosco *knew* that, whoever this distinguished stranger turned out to be, here was a man who understood pictures. The youth who, under instructions from Morosco, trailed the stranger back to the Hotel Magnifico, where he occupied the Gardenia Suite, learned from a well-primed concierge that he was Mr. Peter Lawson, of the Lawson Gallery in London.

Thus far, in Morosco's eyes, the visit of the Princess Gobolinsky, whom he believed to be the Princess Golobinsky, and that of Mr. Peter Lawson were unrelated phenomena. But they became related when, later that day, the sleuth reported that they were taking tea together at the Café de Paris, across from the Casino.

On the following morning the distinguished Mr. Peter Lawson paid another visit to the galleries, bowed as before to Morosco, repeating his unhurried scrutiny of the pictures and saying nothing. Peter was building up in Morosco's mind an indelible picture of a rich, successful man of unimpeachable integrity . . . a man who, from the nature of him, would not be thus interesting himself in the meretricious artistic rubbish which—as none knew better than its owner—was the stock-in-trade of the Morosco Fine Art Galleries. It followed, therefore, as the night follows the day, that the opulent Mr. Peter Lawson, acting as the buying agent of the incredibly rich Princess Golobinsky, had found among the two hundred-odd mediocrities some artistic treasure.

That was a Friday.

The lights of the Morosco Fine Art Galleries remained on all that night while Morosco himself, tortured and hag-ridden by his doubts, examined every picture in his possession in the hope of penetrating the secret locked in the heart of Mr. Peter Lawson. Morosco's doubts and perplexities were only equalled by those of Mary Lawson, who was wondering whether

It was fortunate that Monsieur Morosco was such a greedy man. How otherwise could Mary and Peter pay their bill?

"It's all very well to say you've reformed," said Peter. "That just means I have to steal twice as much as before. I can't afford to reform"
Harry Norland

Monte Carlo fraud

continued from previous page

she had not been a trifle hasty about reforming. Now that Peter and his confederate, the spurious Princess Gobolinsky, were unable to forgather at Fred's Bar, meetings were being arranged elsewhere, so that it was becoming increasingly difficult to keep tabs on them.

Mary was worried, for La Gobolinsky —even if it was, as Peter assured her, strictly business—was far too attractive for a girl's peace of mind.

Strange as it may seem, too, Mary's decision to reform had stemmed from a genuine distaste for her mode of life. She wanted a home . . . babies. When, as from time to time she did, she said these things to Peter, he merely laughed, unable to believe that she meant them. "I don't want to become a prison widow, Peter," she had once said tearfully.

"They won't catch me," Peter had replied, "so don't worry."

But Mary did worry. She was unhappy, bitterly so. Not only did she live in terror of Peter falling into the clutches of the law, or La Gobolinsky —the one as bad as the other—but she was tired of spending most of her waking hours in the bathroom listening on the extension phone to the staccato exchanges between Peter and his confederate. Nevertheless, the plan of campaign against Morosco was beginning to take shape in her mind and she could not but admire Peter's subtle strategy.

On the Saturday morning, after a sleepless night spent in his artistic rubbish heap hunting vainly for Old Masters, Morosco was not at his best. There was something akin to terror in his heart when, around eleven o'clock in the morning, he saw crossing the street the debonair figure of Mr. Peter Lawson, obviously a man without a care in the world.

Once again Mr. Lawson bowed courteously but did not speak. Morosco, conscious of his own rumpled clothes and unshaven chin, but not daring to leave the premises for a shave, waited for another long, agonizing hour while the distinguished stranger conducted his leisurely scrutiny.

At the end of the hour Mr. Lawson paused at Morosco's desk on the way towards the exit. "Monsieur Morosco?" he asked with uplifted eyebrows.

"At your service, monsieur," replied the other, bowing.

They shook hands with much cordiality. The advantage of the meeting was with Peter, who was not supposed to know, but did know, that the other believed him to be Mr. Peter Lawson, of the Lawson Gallery, which, incidentally, did not exist.

Now Peter, still smiling gravely at Morosco, looked at his watch. "Monsieur Morosco," he said, coldly and precisely. "I will return here at three o'clock this afternoon. Will you be good enough at that time to set a price upon your entire stock of pictures. Francs or dollars, as you please. May I count on your co-operation? Until three o'clock, then, Monsieur Morosco. *Au revoir.*"

Never in his long and larcenous career had Morosco found himself in such a predicament. Giving instructions that he was not on any account to be interrupted, he sat at his desk while he did some figuring.

The entire stock had cost Morosco well under two million francs—call it six thousand dollars. When he sold pictures one at a time by retail, he was content with a modest 500 per cent profit. But if they were to be sold *en bloc* in the manner suggested by this man Lawson, he did not know what profit to ask.

Morosco was unused to round sums: he had never dealt in them. In turn, 20,000 dollars, 30,000 dollars and 50,000 dollars occured to him as good asking prices, but he rejected them all in turn for the same reason. All three prices were fantastically high if the stock were no better than it seemed, but absurdly low if, as Morosco now suspected, among these lowly geese he were harbouring a swan. This last possibility was almost too terrifying to contemplate.

What did Lawson know that he, Morosco, did not know? That was the question which tortured the picture dealer and would go on torturing him until the matter were resolved.

By five minutes to three, Morosco was a nervous wreck, still undecided as to the price he should put upon his wares.

At three o'clock precisely—was not punctuality the virtue of princes?—Peter Lawson stepped out of an opulent limousine and, still wearing his grave, courteous smile, entered the galleries. "Well, Monsieur Morosco?" he said expectantly.

Morosco had reached his decision . . . to stall.

"There is a difficulty, Monsieur Lawson," he began. "Several of the pictures here are for sale on commission . . . others to be restored. If I may remove them from the walls, it will be possible to fix a price."

"All or nothing, Monsieur Morosco," said Peter severely. "Let us not speak of difficulties, for there are always difficulties. Include them in the price."

Morosco, who was now not far off hysteria, said: "If monsieur will only indicate to me the picture, or pictures, in which he is specially interested, I am sure it will be possible to arrive at a mutually agreeable price. . . ."

"I see no reason why I should present you gratis with the benefit of my knowledge, Monsieur Morosco," said Peter coldly. "I will buy all your pictures, or none. It is for you to put a price on them. If the price is acceptable, I will give you a cheque now. If the price is too high, I will bid you good day and that will end the matter."

There was finality in his voice, and it was only by the exercise of iron self-control that Morosco could stop himself from screaming as he watched Peter put his cheque book on the desk, followed by a gold fountain-pen.

The ticking of a small mantel clock sounded to the dealer like the racing footsteps of doom. . . .

"Very well, Monsieur Morosco," said Peter after a silence which had become brittle, "since you seem unable, or unwilling, to set a price, and I do not wish to extend this conversation indefinitely, I will make you an offer. I offer you fifty thousand dollars for your entire stock and I will give you, furthermore, until noon on Monday to accept, or refuse."

Thus reprieved, Morosco uttered a deep sigh of relief. Now he knew where he stood . . . or thought he did.

"But," continued Peter sternly, "this offer is conditional upon these galleries being sealed now . . . in the presence of a notary . . . and remaining sealed until Monday at noon."

To this Morosco agreed and when, more than an hour later, they parted with expressions of mutual esteem, the doors and windows of the Morosco Fine Art Galleries were under seal. Morosco, barring accidents, was hooked.

As was expected of him, Morosco spent most of that evening on the telephone, telling the owners of pictures which had been entrusted to him for sale, or for other reasons, that he had received small offers for them. Would they accept? The only owner he failed to locate was the owner of the "reputed" Rembrandt, Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec who, he learned from the lips of La Gobolinsky, posing as the maid, was returning on Monday morning. Not wanting the owner of these pictures to see the seals on the doors and windows of the galleries, Morosco arranged to call early on the Monday morning to discuss "a small matter of business." Morosco then went home to Beaulieu, some seven miles out of Monte Carlo, hoping that with the aid of pills he would be able to get some sleep.

Meanwhile Mary, listening on the bathroom extension phone, was brought up to date regarding the progress of events, as Peter reported them to La Gobolinsky. It might be true, as Peter often assured her, that this was "strictly business," but Mary's quick ear detected a subtle difference in the relationship. The word "we" seemed overworked. There was a husky intimacy in La Gobolinsky's voice which she did not like, but it was not until the end of the conversation that Mary heard what she had feared to hear.

"You know, Peter," the other said, injecting unutterable things into her voice, "you and me"—Riviera princesses are notoriously weak on grammar —"you and me should work together . . . for keeps. We'd really clean up. What do you say?"

What would he say? That was what Mary could not wait to hear. There was a pulse beating in her throat.

"We haven't landed this fish yet," replied Peter cautiously. "There'll be time to talk of that when we have."

His wife began to weep softly. She had hoped, foolishly perhaps, that Peter's answer would have been a categorical refusal. True, he had not agreed to a permanent partnership, but he had left the door open. . . .

The plot to swindle Morosco was, as Mary knew, a relatively small-scale operation, designed to tide them over a temporary shortage of ready cash and to provide the wherewithal to finance something larger and more ambitious. Peter and La Gobolinsky were working upon the assumption that Morosco, sooner than be forced to refuse the offer of 50,000 dollars for his entire stock, could be persuaded to pay up to 15,000 dollars for the "reputed" Rembrandt, Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec left with him by La Gobolinsky's friend. By the time this had been cut three ways, Peter's share would be quite small. It wasn't much and, adding to this the possibility of losing Peter, Mary knew that the time for action had come. Her reformation had been sincere enough, but as she saw the matter, reformation was one thing: sheer, blind stupidity another.

Mary spoke French fluently, so it did not take her long to learn the number of Morosco's private phone at Beaulieu. She announced herself to Morosco as Madame Lawson. "I think, monsieur," she said silkily, "that a brief conversation with me might save you a great sum of money. I prefer not to say any more on the telephone."

So that Morosco should be satisfied that she was in fact Mrs. Peter Lawson, she told him to inquire at the hotel concierge's desk. He did just this and they left the hotel together in his car. At Mary's suggestion he drove her to a discreet café where they might talk privately. When they were seated at an alcove table, she launched directly into her subject.

She said: "You see before you, monsieur, a jealous woman."

"I am sure," retorted Morosco gallantly, "that madame has no need to be jealous of any other woman."

"Alas, monsieur, I wish that it were so," said Mary sadly, "but how can I be expected to hold my husband against a woman who is not only beautiful—let us not deny that—but who possesses a fortune of untold millions? Oil wells sprout on her land like weeds. . . ."

"Madame refers, doubtless, to the Princess Golobinsky?"

"What makes it worse," replied Mary, nodding assent, "is that my husband is a very rich man, who does not need her money. . . ."

Morosco, who had nearly refused to leave his house, thanked his stars that he had come.

"Alas, madame," he said, his voice vibrant with sympathy, "the follies of men are beyond understanding."

"What does it matter to a woman like that," continued Mary, "whether she pays twenty thousand dollars or two hundred thousand dollars for a valuable picture? She could buy one every day. . . ."

Morosco was compelled to swallow a brandy hastily in order to steady his

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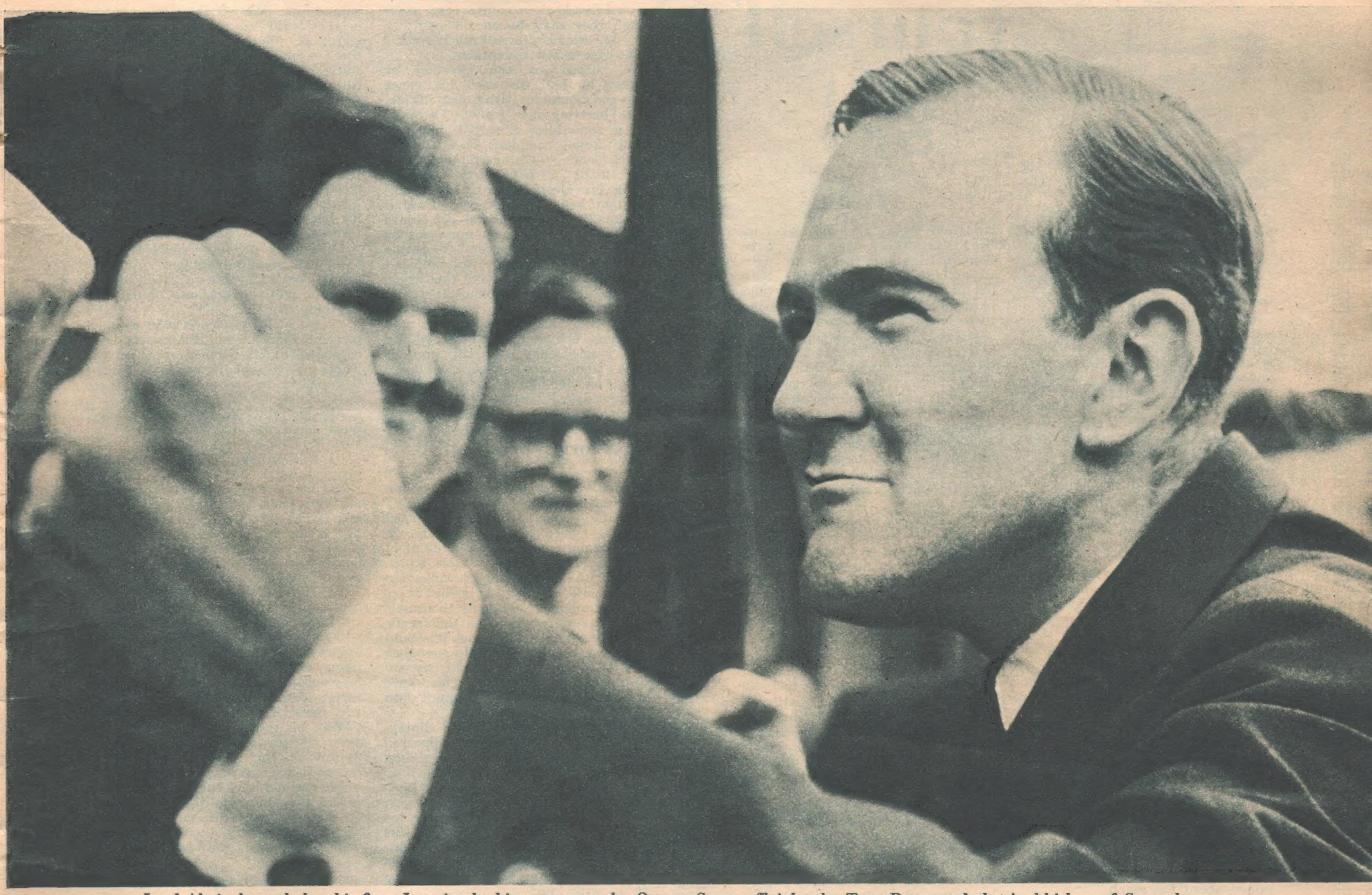
The lane has turned to mud again.
Knotted and gnarled, the ruts display
A map whose landmarks wax and wane.
Changing a dozen times a day.
New hills and rivers meet the eye
Each time the tractor passes by.
The mire that in November brought
The dead of winter to the day
Is now a boon as keenly sought
As birdsong on a budding spray:
For here, frost vanquished by the spring,
The very soil begins to sing.

J. PHOENICE

WILFRED GREATOREX makes a personal call on LORD ALTRINCHAM

The Rebel Baron



Lord Altrincham shakes his fist. In print he hits out — at the Queen, Court officials, the Tory Party and the Archbishop of Canterbury

THE modern block of flats rears impertinently out of the Victorian façade of Lowndes Square, Belgravia. It is clearly for Top People. Chauffeurs linger outside. In the hall a uniformed porter steps forward. As I name the peer I have come to see, a bowler-hatted gentleman winces discreetly.

I am let into the sixth-floor flat by a housekeeper who escorts me silently through the T-shaped hall into the drawing-room.

Alone in the middle of the room is a pink-cheeked and boyish young man with thinning, unruly hair. He is lightly built with narrow shoulders and wears a close-fitting blue pinstripe. Around him, eighteenth-century furniture shares floor space with the paraphernalia of stereophonic sound. Dutch oil paintings line the fireside wall, and there is also a contemporary impression in shades of green by Lawrence Gowing.

John Edward Poynder Grigg, the second Baron Altrincham, is tampering somewhat pointedly with an old clock. He greets me without a smile. As I am two and a half minutes late I apologize for having been held up in the rush-hour traffic. "That's all right. Have you the time? This thing has stopped." He puts the clock down and moves in and out of the room like some fidgety schoolboy.

Thirty-five this week, Altrincham has a zest for lobbing stink bombs into high places which at once makes him the *enfant terrible* of the peerage and the best known odd-man-out in British public life today. He is The Outsider, the Tory most Tories love to hate, the angry young baron who has contracted out of the House of Lords, the Royalist with no friends left at Court. Even as a journalist he finds himself a rare aristocrat in an unlordly profession.

"What is it you're really after?" I asked as he poured me a coffee. "Notoriety? Journalism? Politics?"

He moved across to a settee. "Well, journalism I regard as a means to an end. I love it. But I'm not putting out ideas simply for aesthetic pleasure. It's results I want."

Unoccupied seat

I asked what kind of results.

"I have an itch to be in a responsible executive position. I can't see who's going to offer it to me in the political field, where I would like it."

"You could go into the Lords."

He sank deep into the settee, his hands on his knees. "If I had wrapped up my conscience in a neat little parcel for the party leaders and sat there like a good boy and gone through all the usual motions I might now be a minister."

"Then why don't you take your seat?"

"If you disagree with hereditary membership of Parliament you're a hypocrite if you avail yourself of it."

I said: "Having to be a peer may be a handicap, but why do you think the world's press made so much of your attacks on the monarchy?"

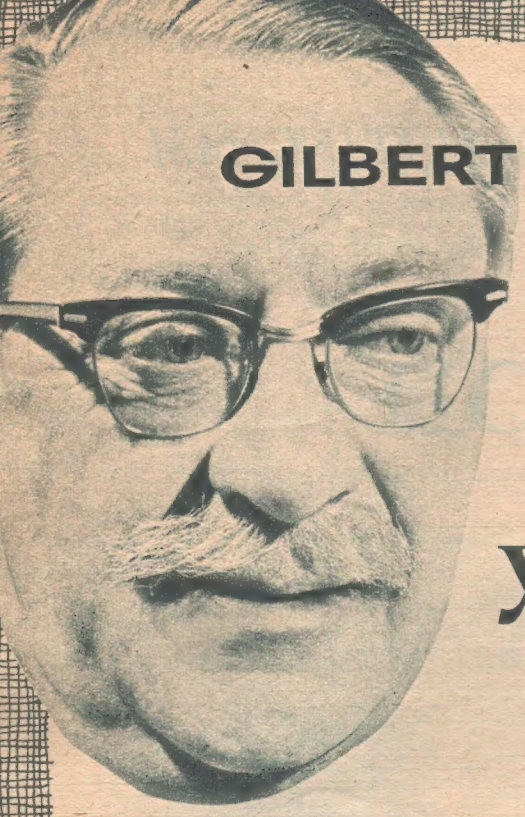
He wagged an admonitory finger. "Not on the monarchy—on certain aspects of the present sovereign." Clearly he had dealt with this sort of thing before.

Wasn't it, I suggested, because a peer was making the attacks?

His Lordship shifted uncomfortably. "I think that is a very unfair remark. If I didn't have a peerage I should almost certainly now be in the House of Commons. And I think my remarks would have carried just as far as a member of the House of Commons."

I asked now about Court reactions to his attitudes.

"I think the Queen may have been upset. I fear she may. Because she had been surrounded all her life by



GILBERT HARDING SAYS...

Let yourself go!

TAMARA TOUMANOVA, named by one critic "the black pearl of the Russian ballet," begins a London season at Sadler's Wells this week.

If I can manage it, I shall try to see her. I believe in going to the ballet, not talking about it. There is already enough ballet-hoo, gush and gossip about ballet.

I enjoy going to the ballet more than most things. Ballet audiences do not eat while there is magic on the stage; they do not want to clatter tea trays as matinée matrons do. The grace and delight of the dancers seems to radiate and reach the audience. We are transported. I dislike being brought down to earth too quickly, after a performance, by balletomanes enthusing about their lovely mania.

I must not, however, be too hard about the raptures inevitably aroused by dancers of the greatness of Tamara Toumanova. When there is a flame of enthusiasm, as there is for ballet and jazz, it is not for middle-aged squares to scorn it.

Enthusiasm for anything, genuinely felt, I am sure should be treated with respect. Particularly enthusiasm in the young.

Shrill and callow

I know that it can be hard to follow this precept, for the expression of enthusiasm is so often shrill and callow. Some people do not seem to realize that the ballet, like wine, is meant to be enjoyed largely with the senses and should not be talked about too much.

Heaven knows, young people have never enjoyed so many advantages and appeared to enjoy life so little. The dance-hall and street-corner boys are bored; they could not care less. Too many of their faces proclaim a great emptiness of soul. They have plenty of time-fillers and time-killers—the juke boxes, the pintables, television sets—but too few soul-fillers.

Ballet, I rejoice to say, does mean something to a large number of young people. So does jazz. Only intellectual snobs will mock these lively enthusiasms.

When I was at Cambridge I occasionally earned extra money by acting as a sort of Cook's guide to visiting Americans. Martha would exclaim rapturously, to her camera-festooned husband Elmer, about the green and ancient turf, the "historic" this or that (it was often the college bicycle shed) and the "cute" old customs, until I thought that Americans were ridiculous. Now I realize that *I* was ridiculous, an intellectual snob, for sneering.

Those visitors from a foreign land were seeing ancient splendours for the first time. They might have been naïve, but they were right to exclaim. Cambridge was both old and beautiful, and they could hardly be blamed for expressing their delight in their own idiom.

I was the fool, half laughing at, half embarrassed by, their enthusiasm for something which I was stupid enough to take for granted.

Now I will listen with what patience I can muster to any genuine enthusiast for just so long as I am sure that he is not merely talking for effect, to impress me.

Honest ignorance is better than any amount of half-baked verbal showing off.

I remember a young woman who managed to get her uncle, an air vice-marshal, to go to the ballet for the first time in his life. He went grumpily, but he enjoyed it. Afterwards he was taken backstage to meet the choreographer.

"The *what*?"

His niece tried to explain.

"Can't understand," the air vice-marshal muttered to the ballet designer, "how you manage to avoid bumping into each other with all that prancing and pirouetting."

The choreographer gave him a look. "You organized many raids during the war, sir? And the aircraft seldom bumped into each other?"

"Ah, my lad, but that was all worked out beforehand," said Uncle. Well, that was honest ignorance, anyway.

The enthusiastic young only become ridiculous when they regard ignorance of their own particular cult as putting the outsider beyond the pale. When they talk contemptuously of somebody being "a square" they do become intellectual snobs, and unbearable.

I have never met one of those eager little boys with notebook and pencil, train spotting on railway stations, who thought any the less of me because I did not know the difference between a 4-4-0 and a 2-6-4. But I have been looked at with scorn and contempt because I had not heard of some obscure dauber, who threw paint at canvas, and whose name was on the tip of every smart alec's tongue in Chelsea.

I am on the side of the young people who will enthuse about Tamara Toumanova, even if they do it rather noisily.

The ones I cannot stand are those pretentious characters who will be itching to write to tell me that I am hopelessly out of date, that balletomania is now definitely out, lingering only in the suburbs, and in provincial suburbs at that.

They are the real snobs. THE END

The rebel baron

continued from previous page

people who really were sycophants telling her that everything she did was perfect."

How had his friends reacted?

At this, the man who often goes it alone, who keeps out of the Lords and who walked out of the Victoria League because he alleged there was a colour bar at its students' hostel, seemed rather strained. He put on a brave smile that was almost too convincing. He hastened to reassure me: "Oh, friends don't throw you over because you are involved in controversy, even though they may be on the opposite side. My friends are still my friends." There were a few exceptions.

We turned to the question of whether he had discussed his views about the monarchy with Court officials before bursting into print. The peer who is something of a dab hand at raising Royal rumpuses was back in his element. "Oh certainly. I've never made a public row without having previously tried to get things put right behind the scenes. I think one should always try and get things done *sub rosa*. But you must not be blackmailed into silence. If people know you are ultimately not prepared to have a showdown you can argue until the cows come home. It's only when they know there is a sort of *ultimo ratio* that you get what you want done behind the scenes."

He seemed pleased with himself. "Have some more coffee," he said, pouring one for himself as well.

I now asked whether he had ever been inside Buckingham Palace.

Tories' brush-off

He searched his memory. "I don't believe I've ever darkened its doors. No. No. Although I might say that I think the public should be admitted when the Queen is not there. It contains certainly half, if not more than half, of her collection of pictures, which is about the finest private collection in the world. It is practically never seen by the public. So many thousands—millions—of people know the façade of Buckingham Palace and it would be a great thrill to them to see what was inside. I certainly would pay my half-crown." He slapped his knee heartily and reeled back laughing into the depths of the settee.

The telephone rang in the dining-room. His Lordship disappeared briskly between the off-white sliding doors.

On his return I asked Lord Altrincham about his relations with the Conservative Party since his attacks on the Eden Cabinet and his more recent decision to skip a Tory get-together because the Prime Minister was going. How did the party put up with him?

The man who has made the tall headlines through his criticisms of the performance of the Tory Party, as well as of the Monarchy, the Church of England and sundry other institutions, sat bolt upright. He wore a combative look. "Well, the Central Office regards me as an absolute leper. But I'm asked all over the place to speak to Conservative audiences, especially at the universities. I always get a highly sympathetic reception. Nottingham University Conservative Association elected me their president last year. There's a considerable ferment in the younger ranks."

I had been advised that the mention of one person would set the young baron's eyes aglow with the light of battle. I asked him about the Archbishop of Canterbury.

For one who once said that the Archbishop gave him the pip, My Lord Altrincham remained surprisingly collected. "I think," he pronounced, "that he's a disastrous Archbishop of Canterbury. He's no spiritual leader. I think he's personally a very jolly man. Since I've been in controversy with him we've corresponded privately and he's always been very pleasant."

Was there anyone he would prefer to see at Lambeth?

"A tremendous spiritual leader. Trevor Huddleston is the type. Or Michael Scott."

At his wedding last December to Marion Campbell, joint editor of his magazine, *Young Elizabethan*, Lord Altrincham insisted on having Scott to officiate. Why did he go to such lengths to secure this parson?

"He's a particular friend and I admire him. We felt there was nobody in the world we would more like to marry us. We were lucky. He was at the United Nations and then he was going off to Africa. If we'd waited till he came back from Africa we should have had to wait a long time because he then went straight to jug."

Roots of rebellion

This set His Lordship hooting with merriment once more. I told him that I found it hard to see how anyone with his background should be so noncomformist. "After all, you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth?"

"I had great advantages. At least people won't be able to attribute unpleasant motives—jealousy or envy or anything like that.

"A lot of lip service is paid to independent-mindedness. But society is so organized at the moment that on the whole people who have minds cannot be independent and the people who are independent haven't minds."

All this rebellion, this independence, must have had its roots somewhere. Was he a lonely child?

"I was an only child for the first seven years."

"It was a political home?"

"Yes. Sort of hereditary disease. My father was a public man. Tried his hand at practically everything, d'you see. He was a journalist, soldier, courtier, secretary to a prime minister and an M.P. twice."

What would he have felt about his son's outbursts?

"One should never speculate."

"You must have some idea?"

Lord Altrincham answered the telephone again. He told the caller that he would be in his office—just off Fleet Street—later in the day. He picked up my question without any reminder. "Well, his initial reaction would have been of amazement and strong disapproval. But we would have discussed it at great length and our points of view would have come much closer."

Did they have political arguments?

"Very much so. Even when I was at preparatory school we went for long walks and argued the toss."

Privileged set

Was he ever in hot water for speaking his mind?

"Not really. But I did try to reform the kings of the school at Eton. There's an institution called Pop—a sort of society at the top of the school with tremendous privileges. I felt that as it had such prestige and privileges it ought to be elected by a larger body—say two hundred and fifty boys. I tried to put this through, couldn't persuade my colleagues and so I resigned. I don't think anyone else has resigned from Pop."

Other influences in his life? What about the Guards?

"I was in the Guards for the last two years of war—a subaltern. Even upon such a naturally unsoldierly character as myself the Brigade of Guards has a very good effect. I'm grateful for the experience. When you emerge from that treatment you have an idea of the anatomy of responsibility."

I asked if he had ever done guard duty at Buckingham Palace.

"Yes. M'm. Frequently. I did guard quite often. The subaltern sleeps in Buckingham Palace and is

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So you want to be a model!

by ALAN LLOYD

Ugly girls, lovely girls, girls without poise . . . the glamour dazzles them all. But most are paid less than typists—and even at the top they hate it

SHORTLY after last Christmas, Maureen Sherry, a pretty brunette who had taken up fashion modelling the previous year, discovered that her vital statistics, in proportion to her height, were the same as those of the Venus de Milo.

Suddenly, after touring fashion houses and photographic studios for more than six months without notable success, Maureen found that her dimensions had become a matter of public interest.

Photographers besieged her home. When she was featured on television, reporters waylaid her at the studios. She was flown to Paris by a national newspaper.

"It was wonderful while it lasted," she says. "But it doesn't seem to have helped my modelling career. I'm still doing the rounds, and I earn my keep by working in a delicatessen."

At one photographic studio in the West End it has been estimated that of about eight thousand model girls in the London area, only one in ten earns enough from modelling to live on. These include "matrons" who model outsize clothes, character models who are often used to represent middle-aged "mums," and girls who pose for deodorant and "bad skin" adverts.

The scope in the provinces, where few girls are employed on a permanent basis, is even more limited. Yet every year thousands of girls, hypnotized by the glamour of modelling, try to get into the business.

Dozens of girls from all over the country enrol each week for short courses—usually of two or three weeks' duration—at "schools of modelling." Three such schools alone send more than five hundred girls on to the market each year.

Most of them never get started as models. "As many as fifty new girls come to see me each week," says Pat Larthe, a busy London models' agent. "Most of them haven't a chance."

Then disillusion

Of those who get work, some are quickly disillusioned. "They come in thinking all sorts of exciting things are going to happen," says Nancy Egerton, a well-established model, "and when nothing exciting happens they are disappointed. You can't make a living straight away."

Nancy took a part-time job as a nanny for the first year, looking for modelling jobs in the morning and looking after children in the afternoon.

Some girls pack up almost straight away. Jane Groundsell, a Bournemouth hairdresser, was spotted by a newspaper, taken to London, and booked by a leading agency.

"Copy all the model girl poses before the looking-glass," a famous photographer told her. "Practise making yourself into wonderful shapes. . . ."

Jane practised for a fortnight. After that she decided she preferred sun-tan on her face to heavy make-up. She went back to her job in Bournemouth.

Pauline Scott, who has modelled Dior and Fath collections, gave up modelling at the age of twenty last year to look for a job as a shop girl. Fed up with being "the year's most exciting discovery," Pauline longed for a normal girl's routine.

Others stick it longer. Patricia Davies was a successful model for three years before returning to a £10-a-week office job. She did not find modelling

So you want to be a model!

continued from previous page

stimulating. "I came to the conclusion that the bored air of the professional model was due to the fact that she was bored."

For a few girls modelling is a successful career. Stafford Hutchinson, a slender, green-eyed model who once worked in an architect's office, treated her husband Don to three weeks' holiday in Switzerland on her savings this year. She earns more than £20 a week and her job has taken her to Madeira, Holland and Germany.

Most top models would not get very far in a conventional beauty contest. "The physical requirements for a fashion model have not changed since I came into the business twenty years ago," says Jean Bell, who runs one of London's most exclusive agencies. "She must have about a thirty-four bust and thirty-five hip, she must be tall, and she should have long legs, a long neck, good shoulders and nice skin. But you rarely find everything in one girl. Good models frequently have bad legs or clumsy hands."

Richard Avedon, a top American photographer, puts it more bluntly. He once described the top models who pose for him as "a group of underdeveloped, frightened, insecure women, most of whom have been thought ugly as children—too tall, too skinny."

Of the small group of girls who achieve modest prosperity modelling in Britain, most are striking in appearance, but few are ordinarily pretty. Some have big feet.

Bronwen Pugh, Pat Basset, Yvonne Marsland, Ann White and Wendy Lewis, all well known in the business, take size eight in shoes; Daphne Abrams and Jane Fenton take 8½, and Julie Young takes size nine.

British models are the lowest paid in the western world. "A girl at the very top, working flat out, can earn thirty to forty guineas a week," says Jean Bell, "but there are not many in that class and they can't expect to work at that rate all the year. And their expenses, on clothes, make-up, their hair and taxis, are very high."

Staff models at well-known fashion houses earn less than good shorthand typists. Several houses pay in the region of £6 a week, and at least one recently offered less than £4.

No model payers

On top of the low average earnings, freelance models, who may be lucky to get a couple of bookings a week —at between £2 and £3 an hour—face the additional hazard of bad payers.

Carol Thomson, who manages a West End agency, considers this the most serious hardship in the business.

One girl who got flu in the recent epidemic phoned and asked her if she could advance some money to pay the rent. "She had had plenty of work," says Carol, "but she was owed £70 in fees. The majority of studios don't pay until six months or a year after the work is done, and some dress houses never pay at all."

British models are represented by no trade union, protected by no association, and have no special laws to guard their hours and fees.

"I believe that there should be some form of organized representation," says Denton de Gray, one of the few men who runs his own model agency. "At the moment the only rule is the devil take the hindmost. Modelling is the most ruthlessly competitive job a girl can do."

In this hirer's market, girls must tolerate and humour clients who are often erratic and sometimes inconsiderate.

One day last October Florence Mann, a Canadian model who works in Britain, was booked with another girl for 2 p.m. at a Mayfair fashion house. "For fifty minutes we sat and waited while everyone ignored us," says Florence. "Eventually the other girl was told, 'We don't want red hair,' and was abruptly dismissed. I was told to come back at five-thirty. I didn't complain."

Models have been shouted at by temperamental designers, and expected to do odd jobs in the office. Jennifer Yates, a serene, willowy model who now works for Hardy Amies, was expected to write invitations to fashion shows for one house which employed her as a model. "They told me what rotten handwriting I had," she says.

According to Jean Dawnay, who recently gave up modelling after perhaps the most envied career of the decade, "The model business is a joke. It is so undignified . . . especially after the age of twenty-five."

Sue Bardolphe, another top model until she gave up this year, found the joke a wry one. "Like any other model girl I was never anything more than an insulted, put-on, exploited clothes-peg."

When Sue once complained because a photographer shouted at her while taking fashion shots on a boat at Cannes, he threw her into the sea.

Modelling suggests glamour to women of almost all types except models themselves. For them there is little allure in the unromantic atmosphere of photographic studios, or in the stuffy dressing-rooms of the couture salons, where stubbed-out cigarette ends, discarded brassieres and laddered stockings mingle with spilled powder and cups of cold tea.

Katie's dilemma

In the dressing-rooms during shows, even the calmest of women lose their heads. Lady Catherine Boyle, who modelled as Catherine Carlton, once swept on to the dais at a fashion show wearing a cocktail dress, one court shoe and an evening sandal.

Modelling on location has its own discomforts. In March this year Eve Lucet, a hazel-eyed blonde, spent three hours modelling a spring collection in a butcher's shop, posing beside the refrigeration plant.

When Margaret Brown, a well-known cover girl, went to the Isle of Sheppey to model bathing suits in February, it was snowing.

"It was also blowing a gale," she says. "I prayed that it would keep snowing so that the photographer could not work, but it stopped—very briefly. I had to undress."

In spite of such prospects, girls of all shapes and sizes clamour to try their luck in the business. At schools of modelling they are advised, before looking for work, to obtain sets of photographs, which cost between seven and ten guineas, and an extensive wardrobe.

Lillian Bron, of Kilburn, who went to a school of modelling in the West End earlier this year, already had a good many clothes. She spent about £50 in all. So far she has recovered little of it in earnings. Her case is typical of many.

"I thought it would be a glamorous career," says Lillian, a bonny girl of sixteen. "But it isn't. I was given a list of several dozen places to try for work. I have tramped all over London. Many of the people are rude and some of the girls are horrid.

"One of the few people who showed any interest wanted me to type and take shorthand. If I had had a secretarial course I'd have done it."

Judith Burnley, of the Cherry Marshall Agency, says: "No matter how realistically you paint the picture, you'll never stop girls wanting to become models. On Wednesday evenings, when we interview newcomers, they queue in the street to see us."

Psychiatrists say that modelling appeals to the streak of exhibitionism that is strong in children and adolescents. Last year Charles Ward-Mills, a former medical student, opened a mannequin school for children in Harcourt Street, Dublin.

Within three months, forty girls between the ages of two and fourteen had enrolled. THE END

It's all part of the job for a model — to be stared at by crowds or to shiver in a swim suit on a winter's day

The age-old method of teaching deportment is still used in model schools. After leaving pupils find jobs scarce

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

What? Accuse me—an innocent trader—of stealing a sleeping soldier's rifle? How dare the police be so suspicious. I did it without even waking him up . . .

THE WICKED ONE

by NORAH BURKE

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN BERRY

Oh, the world is a wicked place! Oh, the injustice that has been done me! I am but lately out of jail—I, Sher Ali, a skilled rifle-thief who has never before been caught. Listen to my tale, O Abdul Hamid . . . !

When my brothers and I heard that the 1st Azkhan Rifles would be in camp near the fairground at the Khot *mela*, we resolved to try and get some of their weapons. The rifles we had already were old and inaccurate. How could we carry on our family feud with Gul Baz Khan and his sons and brothers with such antiquated firepieces?

The yearly fair at Khot takes place, as you remember, at the end of the cold weather, after which all we mountain men return home for the summer. So this was our last chance for months to steal from a regiment under canvas—the best source of supply for good rifles, as you know.

We came down then into the fairground, and set up our tents as carpet-sellers. For, of course, a rifle is easiest concealed in a roll of carpet, as the police know well.

I soon saw that we were not the only ones with the same idea. In the turmoil of people who attend such a fair—among the sellers of horses, jewellery, swords, bullock-harness and such, I saw many other Pathans from our hills.

And suddenly, through the bright dust kicked up by the horses and the fine trotting bullocks, came riding Gul Baz Khan, my enemy. Behind him, his men were leading camels loaded with carpets. His gay turban rose high above the hawk-like face and blue eyes. His long coat was patterned with gentle flowers.

We exchanged glances but not words. I too am proud. I gave him the look of an eagle as he passed, and in my eyes flashed the thought, *Thou, low one, have been known to fish for officers' kit, with rod and hook through the bars of cantonment bedrooms. But I am a stealer of rifles!*

Gul Baz Khan passed and took up his place a little farther along the lines from us. Here he dispensed hospitality in his big tent, as we did also in ours.

I opened my heart and my home to all. I made friends with the police. There was not a day but that you might have seen useful guests seated upon the magnificent red-and-purple carpet in my tent, being served with coffee, sweetmeats and Turkish cigarettes.

In these first few evenings, we did not see anything of the soldiers officially. The police were in charge of order at the *mela*, and the army supposed to be merely on exercises in the district. But we all knew that the real reason the soldiers were there was to be at hand if some little stabbing affair got out of control.

As for me, I held myself aloof from theft and brawl. I pūt on my best *achkan*, the one that is stitched over with little leaves and birds, and I sat with my friends the police, and smoked my silver hookah, and told tales of hunting and blood feud.

But how to get those rifles?

This, of course, is never easy, for the army is aware of our desire. In my father's day, the correct way was to steal from a sentry, but lately the rifle is chained to the man. Often it is inconvenient either to kill the sentry or to steal him too.

So—what to do?

I knew where the rifles would be; not in a guard room as in cantonments, but every man responsible for his own and court-martialled if it were stolen. I knew that in camp each soldier scoops a shallow trench in which he lays his rifle, and sleeps on top of it. Ah, it was hard. . . .

Of course, I considered at first whether to try bribery. Could I find one or two soldiers who would sell their companions' rifles? But my discreet inquiries were met with scorn.

There was nothing for it but to steal rifles from underneath soldiers as they slept.

We made our plans. We would work each on his own, but at the same time

The wicked one

continued from previous page

together as a family should. If one was detected, he would give all the trouble possible, so that in the confusion the others might have their chance.

I put on my work clothes—black—and found myself in the dark lying beside a tent in which there were men asleep. I slid an arm under the canvas. One has to be careful, of course, not to touch the face of a sleeper; but my hands are sensitive with practice, and I can feel the warmth and breath in good time.

I began to probe cautiously beneath someone's bedding for the rifle which I knew must be there; not forgetting, O Abdul Hamid, thy brother's son's cousin by marriage, who got his hand chopped off on such an occasion by that touchy Gurkha who had his *kukri* handy and struck at the intruder.

No such misfortune befell me; Allah be praised. My man slept like a pig, and I was able to possess myself of the rifle—a beauty, as I could feel even in the dark—and to carry it off.

As I was worming my way out of the camp, and almost safe, suddenly the whole place exploded into light and noise. One of my brothers was discovered, chased, apprehended.

I took to my heels like an antelope.

I knew, of course, that the moment it was reported that there was a rifle missing, the police would be on the look-out for anyone returning late to his tent in the fairground. So I made my best pace and got back before they threw a cordon round the place.

I had already prepared, in my tent, under the red-and-purple carpet, a place to receive my treasure. I buried it there and spread the carpet again on top. I laid myself down, asleep, and woke indignantly when the soldiers came through the fairground, looking for the rifle.

They searched, but they did not find. The fair is a big place. Now I was safe for the time being. The police were my friends. In any case, they would not pull my property apart without some grounds for suspicion.

Next day I entertained the superintendent of police in my tent. He sat upon the very place where the rifle lay concealed, and discussed the price of carpets. Indeed, he bought a carpet off me before he left, though what he really wanted was information about the movements of the various Pathans in the fair the day before.

I was able to smile upon Gul Baz Khan as he passed. In his eyes I saw that he knew I had the rifle, and for what purpose I had stolen it. In the sunshine and bustle of that day, life was very sweet.

But not for long. A man turned up, asking to see me—a camp hanger-on, may his eyeballs rot. He advised me secretly that it was known to the police where the rifle was, and that they were preparing that very moment to pounce upon me and search my tent. At the time I thought this man was seeking a reward from me for such information—and I paid him too, may Allah forgive him—but now I realize that he had been bribed to put thoughts into my head. There was enough truth in his warning to save his skin at the time, but not in his suggested remedy, as you shall hear. If I meet him again, I shall cut off his ears.

Because what he suggested was: "It is known that you are despatching this red-and-yellow Kabul carpet to the superintendent of police. Why not get the rifle out of the fair in that? No one will search *that* roll. Once it is past the cordon, your brothers can extract the weapon."

After hasty discussion with my family, we decided to do just that. The rifle was the only one we had been able to steal, so it was worth much to us. A good one. A Lee-Enfield.

My brothers had scarce departed with the carpet when the police arrived, and I began congratulating myself upon a bold move in the nick of time. I stood in pained silence as they began opening all my merchandise. But when they found nothing, they rolled back the carpet we stood on, and discovered the place where the earth had been disturbed.

So I demanded to know who had last camped in this place before me, and made remarks about his mother. I called upon Allah to witness that. . . .

At this moment I caught sight of my enemy in the crowd, watching, and it came to me that perhaps it was he who had identified the man apprehended last night among the soldiers' tents as my brother, and so directed suspicion upon me.

"Salaam Aleikum!" Gul Baz Khan greeted me with an evil smile, when he saw my eyes upon him.

But I could smile back, knowing the rifle was not among my things, and looking forward to the change there would be in his face in a minute or two.

"Ya Aleikum salaam!" I returned the polite greeting, and stood with folded arms until the police should uncover my innocence.

Soon they had opened the place and discovered it to be, of course, empty.

I turned in triumph upon my foe, but spoke with milky sweetness.

"I know not, O Gul Baz Khan, what enemy was at my heels while I have been upon errands of mercy about the bazaar," I began. "Someone has laid false evidence against me. Someone has dug up the floor of my tent. But I forgive him—I forgive him. For Allah has not allowed him to witness my downfall."

At that moment I heard the police arresting me for my part in the theft.

I blazed with rightful wrath. "But there is no rifle here," I shouted.

"We have evidence," they replied.

Gul Baz Khan bowed to me. "As you have not got the rifle, you will not be long in jail," he murmured, adding piously, *"Insha Allah."* Then he took his leave of me. "I look to our next meeting, Sher Ali. My foot is in the stirrup. God be your guardian."

My brother and I stood our trial together. Him they had caught red-handed, but against me they had nothing but a lot of bought evidence. I had no police record, and only these lies against me, yet I was thrown into jail. After all the trouble, hard work and danger, prison was my reward.

Ah well, I thought, one or other of our family is away from home for a few months, from time to time, in jail, and now it is my turn. My sons and my other brothers will take care of the women and children till I get back. They will look after the rifle too and steal lead and make bullets for it.

But when I got home, I found to my horror that the rifle was not there. My brothers told me how, as they were carrying it in the carpet out of the fairground that day, they were set upon by thieves, beaten, and robbed. That beautiful rifle was gone. . . .

I have seen Gul Baz Khan only once since then, and he was out of range of this poor weapon which I carry. If I had had the Lee-Enfield I could have picked him off nicely.

He was the other side of a barren valley, beyond a broad stony river with no water in it, and the sun was sparking bits of mineral in the rock, and making the air dance; but I saw enough to keep out of his sight, because he had the Lee-Enfield. *My* rifle. . . .

Oh, the world is a wicked place, Abdul Hamid. In sorrow I take my leave of you. My foot is in the stirrup. *Khuda Hafiz!* THE END

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The Intruder

My load is shed. My will has fled.
I laze in seventh heaven.
I have not spent a day in bed
Since nineteen-forty-seven.

What joy to wilt beneath a quilt,
To feel one's cares uncoiling,
To lie without a pang of guilt
And think of millions toiling!

A dappled sky enchants my eye,
The birds beguile my hearing.
Oh, rapture!—broken only by
The window cleaner, jeering.

E. S. TURNER

Sally And The Time Machine

Sally rang me up the other day, sounding very urgent, and wanted to know was it *on* or *back* for the clocks, because she always got it wrong, and she knew that one was nice because she could stay in bed an extra hour, and one was nasty because it meant getting up early on a Sunday, which didn't seem fair. But she couldn't remember whether it was nice in the summer and nasty in the autumn, which would suit the seasons, or vice versa.

It was no good going out to look at the street clocks, either, because some of them changed at Saturday lunchtime, and others were left until Monday morning, or even ran down and said *anything*, which was terribly confusing.

She'd consulted her diary, and all that said was "British Summer Time begins 2 a.m."—quite inscrutable, and a fat lot of good, because how was she to know whether that meant 3 a.m., or 1 a.m., and did they mean 2 a.m. G.M.T., or B.S.T., anyway?

I told Sally to hang on while I went away quietly and looked it up in the paper. She sounded very grateful and said she'd write it down on the kitchen slate, to remember.

But that was a mistake, as it happened. Because, Sally told me afterwards, John thought it was a message for him, and went round the house after her, altering all the clocks, and so did her mother, who was staying for the weekend, and so did the children next morning, and in the end they were keeping New York Time—or would it be Tokyo?

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

Dear Little Brother

Are you taking my sister to the theatre?

That's right.

This is the first time you've called for her, isn't it?

Yes.

Are those chocolates for her? Because she's not supposed to eat them, you know. She gets spots.

Oh. Thanks for telling me.

That's all right. She's not supposed to stay out late, either. Daddy won't let her.

Right. How about telling her I'm here?

She knows. She's been watching out for you. We all have. Is that your own car outside?

Yes.

She's never been out with anyone who had his own car.

Well, it'll be a new experience, won't it? Haven't you any little friends to go and play with?

I'd sooner talk to you. You're twenty-two, aren't you?

You seem to know a lot about me.

I know more than that. Your father's a bank manager, isn't he? And you're rather shy and wouldn't mind settling down soon. And my sister reminds you of a Greek goddess, and you make up poems about her, and they're really dreamy. Can you make up poems about anyone?

Would you consider going away if I gave you this box of chocolates?

No, thanks. I don't take bribes. I'll tell you what I will do. I'll go if you make up a dreamy poem about me. Go on, see if you can make up a dreamy poem about. . . .

LIONEL DAVIDSON

Slow Motion

The garden snail is a simple fellow,
A regular ne'er-do-well:
His home's a mellow, cinnamon-yellow,
Scantily-furnished shell;
Yet there is something vaguely lovable,
Hard to define or tell,
About this obdurate, anti-shoveable,
Gastropod nonpareil.

Though much maligned, he is quite refined,
As many a gardener knows:
He runs his race at an even pace,
He slides, but he seldom slows;
And I bewail that the modest snail
Should never receive a prize,
For his mild, myopic, telescopic,
Love-'em-and-leave-'em eyes.

ROSEMARY BAZLEY

The things these priests get up to

It's one of today's toughest jobs. Parsons drive lorries, lay bricks, beat out jazz . . . and give hidings to angry husbands

by THE BISHOP OF WOOLWICH

In a London pub the Rev. Geoffrey Beaumont plays rock 'n' roll hymns. He has also written a jazz mass

FRANCIS HEIGHWAY was an amateur boxing champion and mining engineer a few years ago. Now he is a Church of England parson in Battersea.

At nearly midnight one Sunday he opened his front door to find a young woman huddled against it on the ground. He carried her inside and saw that she was bruised and tear-stained.

It took him half an hour to coax the story from her—that her husband, wrongly thinking that she had been unfaithful to him, had beaten her.

The young wife explained that she had been taking treatment for a slight psychiatric disorder. Part of the treatment was for her to write down her thoughts in a diary. Her husband had found the diary and misunderstood.

Heighway asked his wife to give the girl some tea, then put on his coat. It was nearing 2 a.m. He had taken six services that Sunday and was very tired.

He arrived at the couple's flat to find the door open and the lights on. But it was empty. Uncertain what to do, he went back to the dark street. Almost at once the husband appeared, looking hostile. Heighway touched his arm.

The husband glanced at the stumpy, dog-collared figure beside him and raised his fist. "Beat it," he said.

Heighway's muscular fingers tightened on the man's arm and his expression changed. "You may have smashed up your wife," he said, "but don't come the old acid on me—or I'll give you a bigger ruddy hiding than you ever gave her."

The man's fist and jaw dropped. Heighway frog-walked him up the street and started talking. For four hours they walked while Heighway explained, first, that the man had no right to assault his wife whether or not she had done wrong, and second that in this case she had not been unfaithful.

The couple were soon reunited and a year later brought their first child to Heighway for baptism.

When I was Archdeacon of Doncaster, a married woman became too friendly with another man. Later she saw the wrongness of what she was doing and tried to end the affair. But her lover, a short, heavily-built man with a red face and black hair, refused to be cast off. The woman, who had a small child, turned to me for help.

Next time the lover came visiting I was waiting for him. "Get out," I said. "And never come back."

He argued—so I threw him bodily out of the front door and warned him that I would do it every time he showed up. He never troubled the woman again, her marriage was saved.

Well-developed biceps are often useful in the ministry, and I always warn young men wishing to be ordained that they must keep themselves fit. Only then can they hope to withstand the many work-hazards of a priest's life.

His job never has consisted of afternoon teas and two Sunday services—as

Vicar Vivian Symons rebuilt this church in Kent after moving it brick by brick from London. It is to be reconsecrated next week

The things these priests get up to

continued from previous page

some people persist in believing. Today it means about a fourteen-hour day, six, sometimes seven, days a week. It is the happiest work in the world, but often also the hardest.

The forty-five-year-old Vicar of Biggin Hill, Kent, bachelor Vivian Symons, has just provided his parish with a complete church which he moved almost single-handed from Peckham, nineteen miles away.

Biggin Hill parishioners had only a small, tin-roofed building for their worship when Symons joined them in 1950. He saw no hope of raising the money to build a new church so he asked the Southwark diocesan authorities if they had an old one to spare. They offered Peckham's disused All Saints' Church, and he accepted.

For eight years he has worked fifty hours a week on the project, while still carrying on his regular parish duties. In that time he has dismantled, removed and rebuilt 250,000 bricks, 260 tons of stonework and two-and-a-half miles of boarding. In one two-month period he went through fifty pairs of gloves. He has driven 29,000 miles and worn out three second-hand lorries. With a dentist's drill he has recarved the ornamental stonework and engraved the windows.

The church will be reconsecrated next week, on April 25. The only thing Symons will not have built is the organ, which he hopes that somebody will donate.

The Church knows very well today that it is no good taking a highbrow line with young people. Skiffle is allowed as an accompaniment to hymns. At St. George's, Camberwell, a hot-beat jazz mass, composed by the Rev. Geoffrey Beaumont, the fifty-five-year-old vicar, is sung once a month.

Parson in a pub

About a hundred people go regularly to the church, but for jazz-mass services, the number swells to between three hundred and four hundred. To critics, Beaumont says: "I admit that the music is cheap and unworthy—people are supposed to realize that. But I'm sure God has very wide tastes."

Beaumont is often seen in his cassock, belt and dog-collar in the local public houses, where he plays the piano. He is unperturbed by criticism. A man came coldly up to him once and said: "I've never seen a parson in a pub before."

"And what is your trade, my friend?" asked Beaumont.

"I'm a lino-layer."

Beaumont smiled. "I've never seen a lino-layer in a pub before," he said. "What'll you have?"

Beaumont's argument is that it is one more way to end the "apartness" of the Church. In a public house, the barriers are down, he says, and the priest makes real contact with his parishioners. He is satisfied, after years of trial, that saloon bar conversations make many a convert.

Five years ago the Rev. Chad Varah, Vicar of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, started a Telephone Samaritans service for people too shy to visit him. Today he has a staff of five and a hundred volunteer helpers. More than 1,700 people have dialled Mansion House 9000 seeking help, a third of them considering suicide.

The divorce figure has fallen recently from 60,254 in 1947 to 23,785 the year before last. The Church claims some credit for the improvement; today it spends more time on marriage guidance and preparation than it has ever done before.

A young couple were sent to Canon Charles Raby, of Clapham Parish Church, by their doctor recently. They were legally separated and had given up hope of succeeding at marriage.

They spent four hours discussing their troubles with Raby—who is president of the Marriage Guidance Council of Coulsdon and Purley. He guided them to a new outlook on marriage and they were reunited.

Canon Raby holds regular pre-wedding lectures for engaged couples. For twelve years he has given ten hours a week to the subject.

A New Eltham man and his wife started to fight so fiercely that a woman neighbour was alarmed. She raced at once for the vicar, the Rev. Eddisson Fox, of Holy Trinity Church. The wife was in an obviously shocked state when he arrived.

"It's all right, Vicar," she said dramatically. "It's all over now. There's nothing more to be done."

Father Fox sensed an emergency and phoned for the ambulance. He went with the woman to hospital to comfort her while a huge overdose of sleeping draught was pumped out of her stomach. Her life was saved. The shock of the incident brought the husband and wife together again, and with Fox's help they began to plan a new life.

Every hospital has its chaplain—usually an ordinary parish priest doubling-up. A clergyman's common agony is deciding how much a fatally sick person should be told. My view is that the dying *should* know that their earthly life is ending so that they may make their last decisions about God.

At one hospital I used to attend, a young man lay dying from advanced TB.

"He doesn't know," whispered his parents. "Don't tell him."

But I felt that I could not join in the lie that he would soon be well.

So I talked gently with him, explaining that while everyone hoped he would soon be recovered, he would be wise to prepare himself for the other possibility. He had had no religion before and had never given death a moment's thought. I was able to give him a faith which gave him strength and tranquillity. He died happy. Later his parents thanked me.

Parsons also lead uncounted hundreds of home or church prayer groups which meet regularly to ask God's help for the sick and troubled. A Somerset woman who had been paralysed for seven years became well recently when a forty-member prayer group asked God to help.

About twenty years ago the Church began to see that people must be reached more outside their homes. Today, most industrial dioceses have full-time or part-time industrial chaplains.

In 1944 the Rev. Cuthbert Bardsley (now Bishop of Coventry) started the South London Industrial Mission. It has grown in fifteen years from a one-man affair to one with twenty parsons and scores of volunteer laymen.

One of the parsons, thirty-two-year-old Robert Gibson, visits four power stations, a cable manufacturing company, a steel works and two smaller firms, besides seeing to his parish duties. At the factories he walks round informally ready to help any worker who wants it. His work day stretches from 7.30 a.m. until 10 p.m., six days a week. "It is a young man's work," he says, "—terribly hard, and there are no quick results. But it is wonderfully worth while.

Every Easter and Christmas, the Rev. Neil Nye, Vicar of St. Peter's, St. Helier, in South London, stages an outdoor spectacle on top of a large mound.

At Christmas it takes the form of a carol rally and nativity display. The scene is made real by using animals from Chessington Zoo. Last Christmas, a churchwarden, dressed as a shepherd, was leading a sheep up the slope when the animal broke into a gallop, dragging the churchwarden after it. The crowd laughed.

Later, I was to give an address. I began by asking: "What is the message of Christmas?" A loud "ba-a-a" from the same sheep was my answer. Again the crowd—of a thousand people—laughed. But all were reminded of a Christian message.

Father George Potter, head of a small group of friars who call themselves the Brotherhood of the Holy Cross, has been a prison visitor since 1919. He stays for up to a week at a time in Dartmoor, Wandsworth, Pentonville, Reading, Winchester and other jails. He has helped murderers, thieves, swindlers and perverts to accept their punishment and later to rehabilitate themselves.

The main concern of Father Potter's seven-man brotherhood is the care of homeless boys. Since 1924 nearly one thousand difficult or destitute youngsters have lived with the brothers to be taught something about God, love and discipline.

At seventy-two, Father Potter still cares for twenty-seven boys.

When an old lady found her pension application form too difficult to understand, she went to her parish office of St. Stephen with St. John, Westminster. She was accepting a standing invitation from the Rev. Anthony Tremlett to all local people to bring such worries to him. Her form was completed in seconds.

Lessons in ballet

The Church of England runs 8,210 schools and educates one in seven of the country's children. It caters for the spare-time needs of nearly 280,000 young people who belong to its youth clubs. It has about 15,000 active ministers and ordains more than five hundred new ones each year.

"We must win people back to God," said the Archbishop of Canterbury recently. In the attempt, ministers today hold very early or very late services to suit the needs of working people in their parishes; they arrange services in parishioners' homes; they attend circuses, theatres and holiday camps as visiting chaplains; they run self-help groups like Cancer Anonymous; they help parishioners in every kind of trouble; they teach singing and dancing, and at least one teaches ballet.

In 1851 there were one thousand parishioners to each parson. Today there are three times a many. The Rev. Clifford Pollard, of Luton, wrote to the papers pointing out that Sunday was the easiest day in the parson's week.

It is the day he takes five or six services in anything from one to four churches.

THE END

THE WITNESS STATES

INVESTIGATION:

The murder of Lucille Dupont, found strangled in her bedroom, with her jewellery missing.

FIRST WITNESS:

I am Harold Evans, the next-door neighbour. I heard screams coming from the Dupont house at about midnight and got up to see what the trouble was. The house was in darkness, but the front door was open. I thought it might be burglars and I called, "Who's there?" The maid—I don't know her name—came running downstairs in her dressing-gown and said, "Oh, it is terrible. She is dead. She is dead. You said you would not touch her." She got hysterical and said, "Oh, I thought it was monsieur." Then she fainted.

SECOND WITNESS:

I am Yvette Lecler, the maid at the Dupont home. I was in bed when I heard the screams. I got up and looked in the passage. Madame's door was open, but monsieur's was shut. I thought he was beating her—she was a jealous woman and often made scenes. When all became silent, I tip-toed and looked in madame's room. I could see that she was dead and was horrified. When I heard someone downstairs I thought it was Monsieur Dupont. No, I cannot remember what I said.

THIRD WITNESS:

I am Arsene Dupont, and I am deeply shocked by what has occurred. I was fast asleep when the police arrived—I sleep badly and had taken a pill. I can think of no reason why anyone should think I killed my wife. Lucille was highly strung, it is true. She did not like living in England, and to placate her we never spoke English in the house. That is why we had a French maid. But it is inconceivable that I should kill her. Besides, is it supposed that I made off with the jewels? I swear there was nothing between me and the maid. Why, the girl has an English boy-friend. Why not ask him if he thinks he has a rival in me?

FOURTH WITNESS:

I am Derek Lipton, Yvette's boy-friend. Dupont a rival of mine? Don't make me laugh. It's true he's made a few passes at her, and his wife might have noticed. I couldn't say, Inspector. But I never liked Yvette working there. I want to marry her, when I can afford it. I don't know who killed Madame Dupont, but I am quite sure Yvette didn't have anything to do with it.

Who did? Turn to page 28 for the Inspector's comment

STAY YOUNG LONGER · 2

by W. E. Armstrong

Hocus–pocus wizards of longer life

Long life seems to go with the job. If you want to live to a ripe old age, then take up nursing — or teaching

With monkey glands and miracle drugs they peddled the secret of youth. But all their magic did was to bring them wealth

A Russian doctor, Sergei Voronoff, claimed that transplanting the sex glands of baboons and chimpanzees into human beings would make them live longer. He died rich, but his experiment was a failure

Two young doctors in a laboratory in Ohio are injecting large doses of the hormone ACTH into middle-aged rats. In Sunderland a team of English scientists observes the effect on living cells, made to multiply in a nutrient fluid, of a few drops of blood serum taken from an old woman.

A French biologist takes a daphnia, or water flea, starves it to a level that only just maintains life, and then allows it to grow to its full size.

In London another biologist keeps a colony of small aquarium fish called guppies in a milk bottle, seldom changes their water, but periodically cuts minute portions from their tails.

A research worker in Scotland shows that senescent strawberries can transmit their declining vigour through the sex cells; an English geneticist notes the significance of the Central Asiatic habit of mating one-humped camels with two-humped camels, while somewhere in a Kenya jungle, a member of Mau Mau kills a panther and drinks its blood.

Such activities seem to differ radically one from the other, but in fact the behaviour of these people has a common purpose that vitally concerns every one of us. They are all, even the Mau Mau man, gerontologists, and their experiments are designed to lead to one end, which is to discover how human beings can stay younger despite the inevitable progress of the years.

Although its idea is as old as humankind, gerontology is a new science, younger than the century. It is derived from the Greek *geron*, meaning old man, and it studies the mysterious process of bodily deterioration which we know as ageing, and inquires what can be done to slow it down.

It is important to note that gerontology does not aim at keeping us alive, to make the already old live longer and more healthily. That is the province of a sister science, geriatrics. And since, by 1970, one person in every five in Britain will be an old age pensioner—nine and a half million men and women—there seems to be no question that the geriatricians know what they are doing.

So, in their own field, do gerontologists. But because they are dealing with prevention rather than therapy, their progress is slower. The reason for this is not obscure. The basic and frustrating difficulty with which gerontology must grapple is that no one can understand why we get old.

Man, a multi-celled, self-repairing animal, should in theory be immortal. But since, manifestly, he is not, gerontologists accept the evidence that neither they nor anybody else can put the clock back, and direct their scientific armoury towards limiting the damage of senescence, or ageing. The object of their researches is to retain in the body at, for example, the age of eighty, the elasticity and vitality it enjoyed up to forty years before.

Delaying old age

Gerontologists do not like the word "rejuvenation," which suggests such emotive and highly unscientific concepts as the "elixir of eternal youth," or the "years falling away." They prefer to think of their aim as a braking, a slowing up of the oncome of age. And cautiously but definitely, as befits the scientific method, they are coming to the conclusion that the chronic degenerative diseases which are the process of ageing *can* be palliated, minimized and even averted.

Man, then, does get old and die and so, of course, do all other mammals in which the biological processes common to man obtain. But other mammals seem to die at their "natural" or "normal" life span, which is approximately six times the age at which they become adult and twelve times the age of their puberty. Man, adult between twenty-two and twenty-five, should on this calculation live to be

Stay young longer

continued from previous page

about 140. In fact, he disappears at about seventy, the proverbial Biblical extent fixed by the psalmist three thousand years ago.

Why this should be so, nobody knows. But the fact that the ever-increasing scientific and medical knowledge of this modern age, and the formidable blueprint which we can now draw up about ourselves and our environment have not sensibly increased the expectation of life encourages rather than dismays the gerontologist—if only because he can eliminate a mass of unsuccessful research.

Though the evidence is negative, it is very useful for the scientist to know just where and how his predecessor in the field took the wrong turning.

For many gerontologists, whether they called themselves that or not, have gone wrong, though at the time their experiments were acclaimed to be the solution of the problem: is there a cure for ageing?

Primitive, then civilized, no less than modern man, has always been deeply concerned in the answer. Some of their methods of attacking it, crude as they might appear to the layman, are taken seriously by biologists and have led to important discoveries.

Age marries youth

Parthenotherapy, for example, which is a long word for the ancient, but still current, idea that an ageing man could hold off the years by marrying a young woman—King David and the Shunammite girl is its most famous historical example—was seriously considered up to as little as two hundred years ago.

Parthenotherapy happens to have been inefficient, but other, no more likely methods, have come to be accepted. We might think an African native unsophisticated and childish when he drinks the blood or eats the flesh of a lion because he believes that in so doing he will acquire leonine strength and ferocity; or boils and eats a dead snake so that he might imbibe reptilian cunning. But, as a matter of fact, if he did not know what he was doing, what he did was highly significant. His reasoning was simple in the extreme—"The lion is brave. By eating his flesh or drinking his blood his bravery will pass into me."

We know that, except possibly in a psychological sense, it did not; but the idea is exactly the same as the proved, invaluable principle that underlines modern immunology. We make ourselves totally immune from, or far less susceptible to, certain diseases by injecting ourselves with the serum of such diseases taken from human beings or animal subjects lightly infected with them.

It was this idea which inspired the Russian doctor, Sergei Voronoff, whose "monkey gland" caused such a sensation—and later so much hilarity—in the decade between 1920 and 1930.

Youth, Voronoff thought, reasoning along the lines of the lion-eating savage, could be retained by the transfusion of young material into older bodies. Equating youth—wrongly as it turned out—with the conservation of sexual vigour, he transplanted or grafted the sex glands of young baboons and chimpanzees into human beings.

His claims for his rejuvenating method were swallowed whole by a fascinated public, possibly because his operations were prohibitively costly and somewhat spectacular and, in consequence, possible only to the very rich—who were also often the very famous. If it made these last rather poorer, it quite failed to make them younger.

Voronoff made a fortune and lived himself to be eighty-five years old, but responsible gerontologists very soon dismissed his short cut to the "elixir" as a flashy and unscientific approach to the problem.

Voronoff was a freelance adventurer-gerontologist working on his own. Less suspect and more scientifically plausible, since it enjoyed the support of the medical hierarchy of a powerful nation, were the much-publicised claims of the Soviet scientist Alexander Bogomoletz. His name first became known to the West just before the second World War, when sensational reports of his "youth serum" began to seep through from Russia. His book, with the catch-penny title of *The Prolongation Of Life*, was bought—perhaps compulsorily—by hundreds of thousands of Russians. He was awarded the Order of Lenin.

Bogomoletz asserted that his discovery prolonged healthy and active life to the age of 150, man's apparently attainable span. It was less this figure that intrigued gerontologists all over the world than the suggestion that the Russian's methods attacked the problem of the age barrier at its nodal point.

He claimed to be able to arrest the degenerative processes which cause ageing by the rejuvenation of the bodily tissues, thus making the chronic diseases of senescence—arteriosclerosis, hypertension, kidney ailments, cancer—things of the past. This is the crux of the problem, and gerontologists pricked up their ears.

Irritatingly, the war broke out in 1939, and gerontology had to wait five years before the secret of its new star could be unveiled to a panting audience. The revelation, when it came, was about as revealing as a dead glow-worm. Bogomoletz's revolutionary serum, the famous ACS, an extract, it appeared, from human bone marrow and spleen, had no efficacy whatever.

Another short cut had led to the usual impasse.

Other and equally disappointing experiments in rejuvenation had been made before Bogomoletz and Voronoff. The British physiologist Brown-Sequard believed he had found the answer in an extract of animal testicle. In 1920 the Austrian Steinach thought, like Voronoff, that general energy lay in the stimulation of the sexual glands, and devised an operation in which the seminal vessels are severed. Both Voronoff and Steinach were wrong, for it has been proved that sexual energy does not have any lasting influence on the all-round physiological health of the individual.

In their reaction against the short cuts and "miracle" remedies of men like Voronoff and Bogomoletz, gerontologists have rethought the whole problem of ageing; made, as it were, a spring cleaning of hard-dying and fallacious ideas. Many pet theories have gone into the scientific dustbin. One, which for many millions of people was a lifelong comfort, is the popular notion that longevity runs in families. There is evidence that it does, but not in the sense that longevity can be transmitted as, say, pigmentation or a snub nose can be.

Illness inherited

But in so far as certain diseases recur in certain families, and these diseases—hypertension is one—belong to the group of the chronic degenerative ailments which cause ageing, it is indeed desirable, as Bertrand Russell says, to "choose one's ancestors." Diseases and bodily conditions do appear to be inheritable; so also do positive and beneficial tendencies—good sight, for example, or muscular strength.

That is as far as gerontologists will go. They will not admit that there is a gene of longevity, an actual "germ" of long life that is passed down from generation to generation. And, they point out, we only hear of the successes. Some years ago a carefully conducted inquiry in a Quaker community proved that there was no discernible correlation between the longevity of parents and that of their children.

Gerontologists, though they bear in mind the tendency of certain families to transmit qualities or weaknesses, are far more interested in the influence of environment.

What is environment, and why do scientists think it might be of significant help to them in their efforts to make us live younger? It can be said to include everything that we do, and everything that others and events do to us. Environment is not only the physical world in which we live, but also the interior world of our bodies. By studying these two worlds and the way they interact, gerontologists believe that they can reach, not conclusions about, but pointers to, what might be the cause of premature ageing, for to science all ageing is premature.

The study of senescence from the environmental angle produces some facts that any sensible person might have arrived at; it produces others which are utterly unreasonable.

We all know the contradictory statements made by "hale and hearty" centenarians. "A" attributes his defiance of the years to a lifelong addiction to tobacco and beer and a voracious and unbridled appetite. "B," teetotal and a non-smoker, has always been a frugal vegetarian. Gerontologists are interested in this evidence of what has been going on in the interior, cellular world of the body; but they are equally interested in knowing the circumstances in which "A" and "B" passed their lives.

An analysis of the mortality rates related to professions and occupations sometimes shows tendencies which might have been expected; more often the findings are inexplicable. It is not surprising, for example, to find that ministers of religion live longer than barmen—a healthier, more quiet and less stressful life is lived in a country parish than in a city bar.

But why do Roman Catholic priests die younger than do Anglican clergy? Again, we would expect professional men in general to live longer than unskilled workers, because their environment tends to be healthier one. But no one can satisfactorily explain—yet why qualified accountants live longer than commercial travellers.

According to the latest report of the Registrar-General for the United Kingdom, teachers, nurses and trained nurses survive much longer than people engaged in show business, coal miners and welders. That is a reasonable bracketing, but what makes a doctor die long before a senior civil servant?

These and similar breakdowns of mortality rates are very useful to gerontologists, for they allow the study of the effect of environment on the degenerative diseases, which in turn might give a clue to their causes.

Inconsistent as some of the findings of such analyses are, mortality rate breakdowns have put gerontology on to what many of its practitioners consider one of the most promising medical theories about senescence.

Effect of worry

Gerontologists have called this the theory of the "stress syndrome." They believe that worry and stress, fatigue, mental tensions, drastically affect the chemical balance of the body. The adrenals and the pituitary glands are put out of order and this in its turn leads to the disorders which we call the diseases of senescence. 'If this is so, the redressment will come from hormone therapy of some kind, and it is in this field that many of the most suggestive lines of research are being pursued.

In company with the idea of the "stress syndrome" goes the new gerontological thinking on nutrition in relation to ageing. The French, according to gerontologists, are scientifically correct in their proverb—"To grow fat is to die." Experiments on animals bear it out, and such cold-blooded institutions as insurance companies take it into serious consideration. Increased weight of roughly fifteen per cent above a person's normal poundage heavily cuts the expectation of life at all ages.

Nutritional deficiency, too, is thought to be responsible for certain conditions which come on with age.

Hormone therapy and nutrition rather than monkey glands and drug injection are the sort of policies on which gerontologists—now internationally organized—are working.

That is why the alternative starving and feeding of a water flea; the induced arteriosclerosis in middle-aged rats, and the de-tailing of the guppy fish and other apparently unrelated and bizarre experiments have become the clinical material on which are based our hopes of living younger, longer.

The answer is not yet just round the corner, but responsible gerontologists are beginning to think that the corner is not so far away.

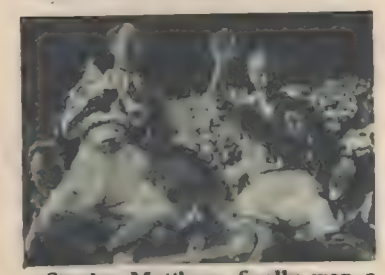
NEXT WEEK: Are children growing up too quickly?

All these events took place in the same year—but

Which year?

Britannia, the new royal yacht, was launched by the Queen.

Gordon Richards at last rode a Derby winner—Pinza.



Stanley Matthews finally won a Cup winner's medal when Blackpool snatched a 4—3 victory from Bolton Wanderers.

For the first time for over twenty years, a government won a seat from the Opposition—at Sunderland.

Princess Victoria, mail ferry steamer, sank in the Irish Sea.

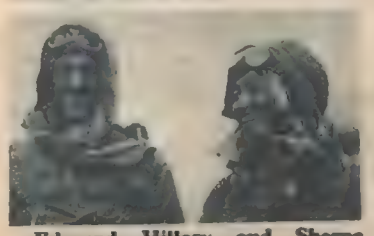
Sugar rationing ended.

Marshal Tito lunched at Buckingham Palace.

Tulyar, past Derby winner, was sold for £250,000.

In February, Canvey Island almost disappeared under water.

Queen Mary died at Marlborough House on March 24.



Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing conquered Mount Everest.

Mr. Churchill became Sir Winston.

Now turn to page 33 for the year

Britain's taste for tomatoes is dwindling. This month growers vote on whether to scrap the board

What's all this hullabaloo about TOMATOES?

by KEITH ELLIS

Rows, court cases and muddle have turned the Tomato Board into a figure of fun. The joke may soon be over

In the office of his £100,000 nursery at Cottingham, near Hull, Harry Wright has carefully filed a crumpled sheet of foolscap. It is headed: "We, the undersigned, are members of the disciplinary committee of the Tomato and Cucumber Marketing Board sitting in London this 18th day of July, 1958." The rest is blank.

When he was brought before the committee for failing to make a proper return to the board, Wright handed this sheet of paper to the chairman. He wanted a record of the names of the people trying him. But the chairman, Matthew Cripps, Q.C., screwed it up and threw it on to the floor.

"This is dictatorship," cried Wright as he picked it up and pocketed it for future use. "You are no better than Hitler was in 1939." He then took out a camera and photographed the members. They fined him £10.

On principle, Wright refused to pay, and the board sued him at Westminster County Court for both the fine and the £96 levy which he owed. Although Judge Sir Edgar Dale was not impressed with the disciplinary committee as they were shown in Wright's photographs—"two appear to be asleep, one is smoking a pipe and does not appear to be interested"—he found against Wright.

With costs, the bill now amounted to £210. But Wright again refused to pay. The incident ended with bailiffs distraining on some tools, cultivators and a portable air-compressor.

Star performers

At the end of this month, the periodic rows which have turned the board into a figure of fun will come to a head. All registered growers will be asked to vote on whether or not they want the board to continue in being. If they vote against it, it will be wound up.

Such a result would be a triumph for Wright. He and his friends, Harry Coulson and Jack Merricks, have long been the star performers of the Abolitionist Group, an organization dedicated to getting rid of the board.

Wright and Coulson have grown tomatoes commercially for a long time. Merricks, a general farmer who grows only a few for his own use, insisted on registering himself voluntarily with the board and then refused to pay his levy—or the subsequent fine.

Between them, the Abolitionists have turned the board's annual general meetings and disciplinary committees into rowdy demonstrations. There have been slow handclaps, allegations of voting irregularities and shouts of "Twisters." Once the chairman called in two policemen to restore order.

The Abolitionists particularly resent the way the disciplinary committee is constituted. Ronald Brighton, a West Country grower, said recently: "The board pays the judge, acts as prosecutor and then forms the jury."

But recently, dissatisfaction with the board has spread far beyond the Abolitionists. In February, the Lea Valley Growers' Association—in Hertfordshire and Essex—the most powerful in the country, passed a vote of "no confidence" in the board. Shortly afterwards, John Elliot, a Heysham, Lancashire, nurseryman, collected the two hundred signatures needed to demand a poll on the board's future.

Many of the growers who will vote against the board would agree with Wright's view. "The board," he says, "is the biggest parasite the industry has ever had. It has taken £400,000 from us in eight years. And we have not got a penny in return."

The Tomato and Cucumber Marketing Board is an odd animal. It is composed of twenty members elected by

continued on page 32

EARTHSHAKER

the powerful new African novel by ROBERT KREPPS

Maria made up her mind. The man she had welcomed to her heart was trapped and outnumbered. Reluctantly she pressed a pistol into his back

FOR the English settlers in Africa, that spring of 1893 was a time of tension. Already they had clashed with the Matabele near the town of Victoria. A war with the natives loomed ahead. . . .

The handful of white people who lived at Bulawayo kraal, right in the heart of the Matabele territory, knew that if war came their lives would hang on the sufferance of Lobengula, the native king.

There were a couple of traders: Ernst Prinsloo—a Boer agent for the South Africa Company—and his English wife, Maria; and an American named Gabriel Decker. Maria and Decker had ridden from Victoria together, an act that had displeased her husband.

Decker, in fact, was more than a little in love with Maria. He pretended that he was in Bulawayo to sell American guns to the Matabele—but his secret intention was to steal the king's hoard of diamonds.

He was in Bulawayo some days before he was able to see Lobengula. On a slope behind the kraal, Decker demonstrated the accuracy of his own rifle. The king was impressed and agreed that Decker could stay there until the guns arrived from America.

Riding back down the hill, Decker was trembling with excitement. He'd hooked Lobengula. He'd bet anybody that when he eventually lit out, he'd have enough loot in his saddlebags to make him independent for the rest of his days. . . .

PART THREE

LOBENGULA was conferring with his indunas, Manyao and Mjana. He leaned his weight upon his knob-kerrie, a four-foot club made of a white rhinoceros horn, and said: "What of the white man Dakwa? Is he a true man?"

"He is no jackal, Lord," said Manyao promptly. "I have looked often into his eyes and seen honourable savagery there; I wish the man were black. I would take him for my captain; he would lead my *impis* into battle."

Lobengula lifted his gouty leg and rubbed the knee, balancing with his club. "*Ha,*" he said, "I too have thought of this. He grasps a gun in his fist and causes it to do whatever he desires. And he is no lover of the English. . . . Jacobs, you have lived among white men, you are half Boer yourself. Tell me now, what kind of white man is this Dakwa?"

"He is American," said John Jacobs, the king's secretary. "His people once fought the English in a big war which I heard of in my youth when I lived with the missionaries."

"He might fight them again even though he is not black," said Manyao thoughtfully.

"And what of the Boer, Prinsloo?" Lobengula asked. "He is married to an English woman. Does this mean that his heart is English?"

"No, Lord, he is faithful to Your Majesty, because you are the fig tree that shades him from the sun," said Jacobs. "And does he not have a black wife also: Nomvimbi, with whom he lies when his white wife is far away?"

"Many white men have taken black women, but their hearts have not been soft towards me. If I said: 'Come here and fight this man Dakwa, who does not like the English'—would he do it?"

"If the king commands it, he will do it, but not for the English."

Lobengula drew Manyao close. "I have a plan to see what this white man of yours is made of," he said. "Can he fight or only shoot at chickens? Let us find out."

"As the Earthshaker decrees."

Lobengula released the induna's arm. "Jacobs, I would not have this Dakwa killed, because of his guns which might not be sent if he were dead. Is it true that white men sometimes fight without spears, striking each other great blows with their hands?"

"True, Lord."

"And do they slay each other in this way?"

JACOB, remembering the beating he had once taken from a farmer for stealing a few worthless eggs, said: "No, but it is very painful. They hit one another until one or the other falls insensible. I once beat a farmer in this manner, and he could not stand for a week."

"Surely you are a hippopotamus for strength," said the king, eyeing the slight Jacobs. "But since I desire to see Dakwa fight and not die, I had better send him against someone less powerful than you. Therefore I will say to him: 'Fight with Prinsloo.' "

"That will be sport," grinned Manyao. "If the armies are allowed to watch this thing, it may keep them from thinking of their dry spears for a little."

"It was my thought," said Lobengula.

GABRIEL DECKER sat with his dog at his feet. Opposite him sat Lobengula with ten or twelve indunas and a few wives and witch-doctors squatting on either side of his chair. The king was eating marmalade out of an English jar.

The American shifted his gaze. On the slope of Bulawayo hill above was a great concourse of warriors, standing packed in an orderly semicircle that reached all the way to the crest. It was as though all Africa had mustered to see him get drunk.

"Doesn't make sense," he said to Maria. "They're like a bunch of Romans waitin' for the gladiators."

"Why, Gabe"—as the alcohol worked on her she'd begun using his first name—"don't you know it's a remarkable honour they're giving you? I'm sure no white ever held a genuine commission with the Matabele before."

"Well, he wants me to give his boys lessons in sharp-shooting. It's like Jacobs here," Decker said. "He can write, so he's a secretary; I can shoot, so I'm gonna be a captain."

The king said something to a slave, who came across to carry away the bottles and pile them on one side: brandy and rum and decanters of Scotch, presents to Lobengula from traders and ambassadors.

Decker sadly watched them go. "Party's over," he said, "and just when I was getting started."

Jacobs stood up unsteadily. "The king says you are to fight now." He backed away, speaking to Decker. "He has never seen a boxing match."

"Well," said Prinsloo jovially, bouncing to his feet, "that's an embarrassment, eh? Whatever put that in the old ruffian's head? We're in no position to refuse, of course. He's the king."

Decker grew taut, trying his best to take in this surprise and adjust to it. It was plainly no shock to the Boer. "Oh, you dirty dog," said Gabe, shoving himself up.

"What is it?" asked Maria plaintively. "What's wrong?"

Gabe shucked his coat and gunbelt. "Ask

Woman in the shadows

"Gabe," said Maria, her voice choking with sorrow, "please give me your gun"

Earthshaker

continued from page 18

Ernie, *I* don't know." He glanced at Deadhead, and said firmly: "Sit!"

"Lard-belly wants to see us box," said Ernst. He flexed his arms, bent his knees, inflated his chest. He was dressed for sparring in a thin cotton shirt, loose trousers of grey wool, and soft *veldschoene*, home-made shoes of untanned yellow hide.

Gabe thought wistfully of his old moccasins; the stiff top boots weren't made for nimbleness. He hitched up his pants and sighed. He'd been sucked in as neat as dammit. To fight a brute like this he ought to have been sober and hungry.

"Well——" he said.

Suddenly Ernst shot forward and delivered a straight violent blow with every pound of his body behind it. Gabe staggered back and Prinsloo sprang after him and lashed out a fist that caught him flush on the jaw, bowling him over.

DECKER struggled up, off balance and unable to avoid a succession of slamming punches. Blood ran from a gash on his temple, luckily missing his eye. He heard the wild cries of the Matabele, and the thunderous beating of their feet on the hillside. King Lobengula was frowning at Decker.

Prinsloo danced at him. He was not only untipsy, he looked as if he'd had some training in this business. He caught Gabe a flailing blow in the belly and, as the American doubled, brought up his knee under Decker's chin with a vicious crack.

Gabe tumbled, rolling on the dirt. "*Verdoem vrou-dief!*" he heard Prinsloo mutter. The Dutch was plain enough: "Damn wife stealer!"

Decker couldn't get up. He could not possibly rise to tussle any more with this giant. And yet if he didn't get up, he wasn't a man. He might not get his captaincy and his hut in the kraal.

Drooling spurts of curses and gouts of blood from his torn mouth, Decker hoisted himself slowly up. He was a flaming pillar of anguish, but he was Gabe Decker and he'd never been whipped, nor would he be till they killed him.

Cocking his right fist, he swayed forward, and into the bright blue eyes of Prinsloo there oozed an emotion very like the beginnings of awe.

Gabe gathered himself and hurled the greatest blow he had ever struck in his life, just above the yellow beard in the middle of the Boer's big face.

Prinsloo went down like a stalk of corn to a sickle. Gabe collapsed over his body. Ernst cuffed him weakly on the ear. They half-sat, half-lay together, pawing and swiping, neither of them quite sane. At last they rose, using each other as props, still flailing with dim resentment.

Such a pandemonium of cheering as had seldom been heard in the Matabele country resounded above them.

Gabe lurched towards the Boer and Prinsloo backed away, mewing fright. Decker caught him by the shoulder, balled his right hand and sledged it into the ruined face. Again and again he struck. Gradually the Boer's legs crumpled and he sank down. Now his head was level with Decker's waist.

Gabe swatted him on the cheek with his open palm, and Ernst toppled and lay altogether quiet. Gabe looked at Maria, as white as terror with her knuckles against her lips. "He had me beat in the first minute," Decker panted, "but he just quit. I'm sorry I had to mash him up for you."

"I'm glad you whipped him," she said. "He hit you deliberately foul blows. I—I think he deserved it."

Two hours later they were all on the way to being very drunk. The mass of warriors had gone, only the king with his royal guard and a few headmen remaining near the three whites. Lobengula, swallowing beer from a gourd almost as fast as his slave could fill it, turned to Manyao.

"I think you should listen more," suggested the king softly, "and nourish yourself less; for only you of all my men here speak the language of the English, and I wish to learn all about Dakwa."

"They are using strange words I do not recognize," said the old induna fretfully.

"Too much beer will prevent one from recognizing his own toes," said Lobengula, knocking the cup from Manyao's fist. "What does Dakwa say now?"

"A war cry of his people. He is ready to fight again."

"He is my man," said the king with pleasure.

As a matter of fact, Decker had bawled for the tenth time: "Where's my pants?"

He made a ludicrous picture. Immediately after the match he had been created a captain; his clothes had been tugged off and a thick kilt, a splendid garment made from the tails of forty leopards, tied on him. Over this he had buckled his gunbelt.

Maria was saying tipsily: "Dear Gabriel, I am so glad you're here. I haven't anyone else to ask . . . Gabe, what's wrong with Ernst?"

Decker would have liked to say that the Boer's worst fault was being married to a woman whom Gabe Decker coveted; but he wasn't that tight. "Wrong?" he repeated.

"He isn't himself. There's something on his mind and it's changing him horribly. He's surly as a bear, and he won't leave Bulawayo nor tell me why, though we're in dreadful danger."

"Maria," said Decker solemnly, "here's the honest truth; I'm too beat up and whiskied to tell you anything else. You have a man there that I wouldn't trust with a parlour full o' millstones. But you sit here, and I'll inject some more whisky into Ernie so we can find out what's eatin' him."

HE stood up, and she sprang to her feet beside him. "I won't," she said hotly. "I won't listen to you make a fool of my husband."

He grasped her bare arms. "Sit down," he said harshly. "You lugged me into this and by God you won't walk out before I'm done. Sit down," he repeated, and forced her to her knees.

Lobengula nudged Manyao. "Are they making love?" he asked in a curious whisper.

"Yes," said Manyao. "It is the custom of the white men to subdue their women in this fashion, with much outpouring of words."

"Wake up," Decker said, dragging Ernst by the shirt, "time for another drink, old hoss." Ernst's eyes opened, dull and out of focus. "Here's to the English!" said Decker, shoving a bottle into his hand.

Prinsloo collected his wits. He sat up stiffly and laughed. "Here's their damnation," he chortled, "it's coming, it's coming soon. Into the sea with 'em." He drank the whisky.

"Stop that!" cried Maria.

"My wife loves 'em still, but I don't blame her," said Ernst. "They used to be her folk." For a moment the blue eyes cleared above the blood-matted yellow beard. He looked at Decker with candid malice; then the enormous load of alcohol overcame him again, and he embraced him. "Gabe, you are a fighter! Dutch, you ought to be."

"You were telling me what you're worried about. Is it the English?"

Ernst tapped Gabe's bare chest solemnly. "I'll tell you what I think about. It's the same thing *you're* thinking of, night and day. You're here to *roof die skathamer*, and so am I."

"What do you mean, Ernst?" asked his wife, pressing his hand tightly.

He showed her a sly, vacuous face, "Dear heart, innocent little Maria, did you think I took on this job of Rhodes's because I couldn't do better? No, no . . . but I imagined I could walk in here and pick up what I wanted and slip away. I didn't realize that every cursed Matabele in the land was a watchman for it. There's the problem," he said, rolling his head towards Decker. "Not picking the stuff up, but galloping off with it. Nobody's ever stolen a shilling from him and lived the week out. I've been here God knows how long and I haven't dared lay a hand on one single——" He hiccuped noisily, and did not finish.

"What's he mean?" asked Decker. "What was that Dutch he used?"

"*Roof die skathamer.* Plunder the treasure-house. I—I don't believe he meant what he said. This work for the Company is his career. That was just drunken brag."

"Jacobs says when the war starts we'll have a better chance at it," said Ernst, erupting out of his coma. "When the Kaffirs start running here and there, the English after 'em, confusion, confusion . . . better chance."

That's true, thought Decker. *You're a born crook, Ernie; or Jacobs is. So you two are in it together. I got to lick a syndicate.*

"It's time to go home, Ernst," said Maria, pulling his hand.

"My friend and I are drinking together," Prinsloo said with dignity.

Gabe said: "We'll drink some more soon. Lemme help you put him on the horse, ma'am."

"You've helped me enough," she said bitterly. Somehow she managed to hoist the tall man to his feet. "I don't think I want to see you again," she said levelly to Decker. "Whether my husband is right about your purpose here or not—I don't want to see or talk to you again. Please stay away from us." She guided the staggering Ernst towards the horses.

Deliberately Decker chose a new bottle, uncorked it, and put it to his lips. Dirty work gave him a terrible thirst.

FOUR nights later Gabriel Decker made his move. Clad only in the kilt of leopard tails, his body soot-blackened, he left his hut and moved on the balls of his feet towards the fire at the gate of the royal enclosure.

At the edge of the fire's radiance he went to earth beside a hut. From here he contemplated the guard of the gate. There were four sentries. Two of them sat drowsing with their backs against the wall, beyond the gate, and two stood by the fire.

Waiting patiently until the two by the fire had shifted their feet often enough to bring their backs towards him, Decker emerged from the shadow and skulked along the fence to a point within a couple of yards of the watch.

The guard now stood with his back to the gate. The other one was gazing

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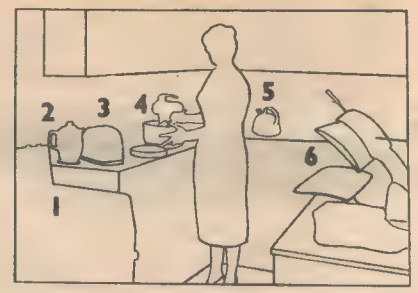
Prinsloo's attack, delivered without warning, sent Gabe tumbling in the dust. But Gabe Decker had never been whipped, nor would he be till they killed him

Switching to Luxury

All your household tasks are done efficiently and in the twinkling of an eye if you run your home by electricity, says ROGER SMITHELLS



1 Cooker with control knobs on top of splashplate. There are socket outlets at the back of the working-topped cabinet for plugging in. **2** Automatic percolator. **3** Automatic toaster. **4** Food mixer. **5** Kettle. **6** Press ironer. On opposite side of kitchen are a washing machine and a refrigerator. These are some of the appliances being used in the test kitchen of the Electrical Association for Women

THE days of slavery in the kitchen are happily numbered and housewives are turning more and more to electricity to make their lot easier. Electricity, like an adaptable genie, can be harnessed to do all the hard work for you. There is hardly a household chore left which cannot be done as well or even better by the simple flick of a switch.

The kitchen's most important function, of course, is cooking. Cooking by electricity is clean and reliable and gives consistently good results. Modern simmerstats and thermostats make it simple to regulate and control the heat.

The oven thermostat pilot light eliminates any guesswork as to when the oven is hot enough. When the pilot light goes out, you know the temperature has reached the degree to which it has been set. The oven will automatically hold this temperature steady until the control is altered to another setting or switched off altogether.

Cleaning is a simple matter, most oven interiors remove easily for wiping, and this should ideally be done while the oven is warm. Solid boiling plates are simple to wipe and the radiant plates generally have a spill plate underneath them.

Such a high percentage of Britain's housewives are now out at work either full- or part-time, that automatically controlled cooking is becoming increasingly popular. Breakfast can be prepared the evening before, put in the oven and the timer set. In the morning what joy to get up to a cooked breakfast and enjoy it at leisure.

Three-part cooker

This idea can be repeated later to cope with the evening meal. Immediately one recalls that pastry, to mention only one isolated item, should never be cooked from a cold oven. Tests by cooker manufacturers have proved that many of our beliefs in this line are unjustified.

In a new house with a specially designed kitchen, it will be worth considering a new sectional type of cooker which will be on the market this autumn. This comes in three parts: boiling plates, oven, warming cupboard. The advantage will be that the oven can be built into the wall at a convenient level. The boiling plates

The Hoovermatic combined washing machine and spin dryer will wash and dry 6 lb. of clothes (dry weight) at a time. It costs £82 9s. 11d. without heater

The Hotpoint "Countess" washing machine has a built-in immersion heater. The wringer can be swung round to use over the sink. The price is 66 gns.

The Morphy-Richards Astral spin-dryer will dry 7 to 8 lb. of clothes in about two minutes. £28 10s. 6d.

The English Electric washing machine, No. 4005, is controlled by a timer switch. The cabinet is work-top height. The companion piece is a heated tumbler dryer. Prices: washer, £74 11s.; dryer, £64 1s.

The Tricity Viscount electric cooker has two solid hotplates. Controls are all out of children's reach. £38 17s.

The Creda Mercury cooker has a work-top height of 33 in. which can be raised by a plinth to 36 in. £35 14s.

The G.E.C. Superb cooker takes on the "squared up" look. With three hotplates and drop-down oven door. £65

continued from previous page

can be built into a working surface in another part of the kitchen and so can the hot cupboard.

When buying a new cooker, measure the space you have available. There are cookers to fit all spaces, large cookers, some with eye-level grills and ovens, down to table-top models with one or two hotplates and a tiny oven.

Washing machines and dryers

Electric washers range from simple, small, hand-driven wringer models to completely automatic home laundries. Which one you choose depends upon the space available, money available and the number of people in your household.

The fully automatic washers, as the name suggests, do almost everything for you. This is useful for the busy housewife.

Washers with electrically operated wringers can be made to boil clothes.

Spin and tumbler dryers have captured the public imagination. The spin dryer spins the water from the clothes, leaving them near dry. The tumbler dryer is fitted with a heater, so the clothes may either be left until they are bone dry or taken out while they are still damp-dry.

Electric drying cabinets also come in a variety of sizes and shapes. The advantage here is that the clothes may be dried and later aired after ironing.

Refrigerators

A refrigerator is an essential part of modern living. It keeps the food we consume really fresh, which in turn keeps us healthy.

The choice in the shops is quite bewildering and most of us find it hard to decide between "absorption" and "compression" types.

Absorption is operated by a volatile gas, which changes its state as it passes through the refrigeration cycle.

Points to consider: silent in operation; no mechanical parts to wear; can be used on A.C. or D.C. mains; higher running cost than the other type.

The term "compression" refers to the motor unit which drives the refrigerant through the cycle.

Points to consider: freezing is relatively quicker; running costs are very low; usually designed to run on A.C. mains except in a few exceptional cases.

Both types of refrigerators are in fact excellent and the guarantee for the refrigeration unit is five years in each instance, more in some cases.

As a rough buying guide buy at least one cubic foot per person in the household. A selection of refrigerators is shown on page 24.

ROGER SMITHELLS WILL HELP YOU

with your home-making problems. Write to him at "John Bull Illustrated," 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope for a reply. Send a rough drawing where this will make your problem clearer

The biggest small refrigerator ever

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ANYWHERE. Just where you want it—under the draining board, tight up in a corner; and there is a model you can even hang on the wall or stand on a working surface.

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Takes everything

BIG INSIDE. 3.1 cubic feet gross — enough space to keep a small family supplied for a week.

LUXURIOUS. Special places for butter, milk, eggs, meat, fish and frozen foods. Everything! And it makes plenty of ice-cubes.

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PENNIES. The Packaway runs economically for less than a penny a day.

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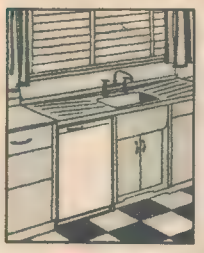

The Packaway will pack away under the draining board — it makes good use of waste space anywhere in the kitchen.

New optional extra —the Packaway tray top. In position a solid work-top. Take it off and you have a handy tray. 39/6.

Like to know all about the Packaway? Send this coupon now for your full-colour leaflet

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Give your home the spring-time look

Cool, man, cool

A refrigerator in your kitchen will keep food fresh longer in the summer and opens the door to booksful of new recipes for chilled dishes and delicious ice-creams

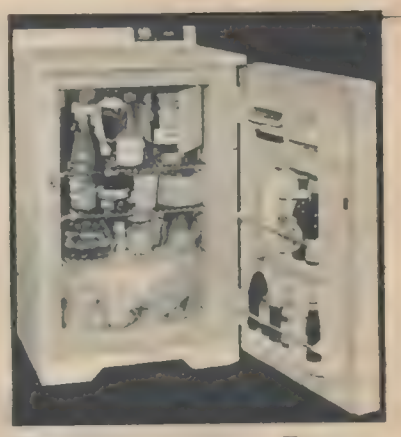
The Electrolux L.26 occupies very little space in the kitchen but has an internal capacity of 2½ cubic feet. There are three shelves and door storage. 47 gns.

The Jackson refrigerator, formed of one piece of Astralan plastic, can stand or be wall or table mounted. In white, with adjustable inside shelves, price 38 gns.

The Hotpoint D.50 Pacemaker refrigerator is mounted on rollers. The interior is fitted with a light, and three shelves. Capacity 5 cubic feet. Price 78 gns.

The Prestcold Big Four is large enough for a small family. The table top is a useful addition to kitchen working surfaces. Internal capacity 4·3 cubic ft. Price 67 gns.

The Kelvinator 6·8 cubic foot refrigerator is suitable for a family of five or six. The interior is champagne colour, outside in white or cream. Price 98 gns.



The G.E.C. Fabulous Four refrigerator follows the "squared up" look in white or honeysuckle with cloud grey panel, and handle inserts in different colours. £75

Small helpers

Electricity helps in a small way too. These gadgets will be welcome in your kitchen

The Morphy-Richards automatic toaster can be controlled to brown the toast to your liking. The slices "pop-up" when done. The outside stays cool when cooking. Prices from £6 8s. 4d.

The Presto automatic electric pressure cooker cooks your food in an economical way, conserving all the flavour and goodness. Food cooks in a fraction of the usual time. The Presto Control Master variable heat control makes cooking foolproof. Price £9 10s. Control Master, £2 7s. 6d.

The Hotpoint Hi-Speed electric kettle, has a long-life element which is specially designed for rapid boiling —almost a pint in less than two minutes. The kettle has a safety device which switches off the element if the water boils dry. In chromium plated copper, price £4 19s. 6d.

The Sunbeam automatic cooker is a frying-pan-sized table top cooker. It is ideal for a single person living alone, and will also produce small suppers for more people. It has a thermostat adjustment in the handle. Made of aluminium, with black plastic knob and handle, price £1 0 18s. 6d.

The Morphy-Richards steam and dry iron is heat-controlled and gives the correct heat and steam for every kind of fabric. The steam-iron will operate using ordinary tap water. Chromium plated, the iron weighs 3 lb., costs 79s. 1d. for AC only; 85s. 2d. for AC or DC mains

Earthshaker

continued from page 20

listlessly at the star-powdered sky.

Stooping, his hand on his knife, Decker slid around the jamb post and flattened himself to the fence, on the inside. No cry followed him. He had not been seen.

Moving even more furtively than before, he crossed the open ground that lay between the royal wives' quarters and the thin wagons in which Lobengula lived.

At the rear of one wagon he listened and caught the sound of gusty breathing; passed to the other, heard nothing, and climbed into it through the unlaced flaps.

Instinctively he noted that the huge becalmed rig did not shift or tremble as he lifted his weight on to its buck-rail bed. That was encouraging. He wouldn't like to waken the king if he had to explore the second wagon.

It was as dark here as in the huts. Decker fished out a match from his gun holster, and by its glimmer saw the sides hung with dead birds and animal pelts, the floor stacked with hundreds of first-class feathers, a beautiful pair of elephant tusks, and opposite these, a small black block of iron.

Decker's match burned his fingers, and he whipped out its flame, returning it to the holster. He felt his way to the small cast-iron safe. He handled it all over: it was locked. To shatter its lock, which he could probably do with the powder from some of his cartridges, would make a crash that would wake half the kraal.

"*Dah,*" whispered Decker in Apache, scratching a fleabite on his chest. The safe could not possibly contain all the wealth of the Matabele king. He headed for the other wagon and stayed a long time with his ear to the gap of the canvas curtains, listening to the respiration and occasional snores within.

At last he glided over the tailboard. Then with the deftness of a weasel he crept between the shadow that breathed and the canopy wall.

At the front, just behind the driver's seat, there was nothing. Drifting back from it, he touched cold iron with his outstretched fingers. It was another safe. Gently his hands moved across the metal to feel the door. A grin of delight broadened his mouth, for it stood open.

With stealth he inserted his hand in the little space between door and box, and swung the iron out on its hinges. The motion was so fluent that not a squeak came from the joints. Decker squatted in front of it, so close to Lobengula's shoulder that the least backward twitch would have brought them into contact. Decker did not intend to twitch. If he had reached into the safe and grasped a snake, he would not have jerked his body back.

The first thing he discovered was a big four-gallon tin case. The lip was jagged and he had to be careful not to bring his wrist down on the razory sharpness. The feel of the stones that nearly filled it made Decker's eyes pop and the hair on his nape lift coldly. They were large, uneven, and greasy to the touch. He had found Lobengula's diamonds.

For a while he remained there, his right hand resting on the stones with a hunger that made him shudder. Then he moved to explore the safe further. Another tin sat behind the first, likewise almost full of uncut diamonds. Crammed into the safe beside them were sacks that bulged with coins. More of these were piled on the top of the iron box, and still others lay heaped against its left face.

There was more plunder here than Decker could have spent in a riotous lifetime. He was all but sick with joy.

Experimentally he drew the foremost can towards him. It was heavy, though not too heavy to be carried in one arm. He hauled it out, cradling it greedily against his sooty chest. For an instant he considered taking the other too, but that would be foolishly sordid and leave him no hand for a weapon. He swung the door of the safe shut.

Lobengula emitted a blubbering sigh and rolled over. Decker nearly flinched as an arm as thick as a log was flopped down to lie against his naked heels. With incredible self-control he did not move. The king began to snore heartily.

Decker, clutching the can of diamonds, edged forward on his toes until he could no longer feel the pressure of the king's arm; then he rose and picked his way, a little giddy with relief, to the back of the wagon. He elbowed the flap aside and sprang to the ground.

The guards of the gate were sitting by their fire. In five seconds he was beyond the utmost range of the firelight. He met no one on his way to the hut.

Deadhead growled as he padded in. "Quiet," he said. Setting down the big tin, he opened one of his saddlebags and carefully poured the diamonds into it. The other was already stuffed with the essentials for a long ride. He carried them out and hung them across the cantle of Isitwatwa, the horse Maria had lent him.

Leaving the horse he went silently to the outer entrance of the kraal. There were only two sentries here, beside another fire. Without a sound of footfall or breath he closed in on them, threw an arm around each thick neck and smashed the heads together.

Swiftly he tied their wrists and ankles with thongs, and gagged them with skin from their kilts. Then he trotted back to his hut, shrugged on the rucksack, caught up the Stetson, and grabbed the shotgun.

"Come on, girl," he murmured to the dog. Taking the empty four-gallon can, which would point to him conclusively if it were found in his abandoned hut, he walked to the horse, untied it, and mounted. He rode out of the kraal past the two unconscious sentries and halted the gelding just clear of the entrance to make sure no pursuit had begun. The kraal slept in tranquil ignorance of his crime. He tapped the horse into action again.

As soon as he hit the flat he raised Isitwatwa to a gallop. When he had crossed this dismal plain he would have to go at half speed until first light, then he would be able to let the roan out once more and put some ground behind him.

In the same instant that he grinned at the thought of the prodigious fortune in his saddlebag the horse stepped into a hole.

Decker sailed over its head, smashed into the earth, and was temporarily

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Earthshaker

continued from previous page

blind, deaf and palsied. He heaved himself up and found that his left side was numb. He struggled, half paralysed, towards the horse, horrified to see that it was limping, favouring the off foreleg.

It hobbled a couple of steps and checked. It was afraid of him. He went towards it, crooning pacifically, but the brute shied and lumbered away. A good ten minutes passed before he was able to lay his hand on the trembling, sweating neck.

Talking calmly, he turned his attention to the gelding's off foreleg and examined it with a firm, gentle touch from shoulder to coronet. There was a nasty sprain of the tendon behind the cannon bone, as well as what promised to be a bucked shin. To ride him for ten minutes would be brutal; an hour or more was out of the question.

Decker was afoot, in the heart of what was now enemy country.

MARIA PRINSLOO woke and without hesitation rolled off her cot, drawing the revolver from under her pillow. In her light uneasy sleep she had heard voices; any such sound in these troubled nights could mean danger.

In a moment she recognized her husband's voice. "Come and have a drink."

She caught the subdued pad of footsteps retreating. Presently she followed them, having first pulled on the jacket of her riding habit. They had gone into the hut which was used as a storeroom and parlour. She passed the stable and halted by the storeroom door. She did not look in for fear of being noticed.

"You must have patience, *meneer*." It was Jacobs, the half-breed secretary of Lobengula.

"Patience," said Ernst heavily. "Good God, John, do you know how often I have watched his wives playing with diamonds in the dirt, like children with pebbles? Do you know how many thousands of sovereigns I have seen carried into Bulawayo kraal?"

"The war you and I have prayed for——"

"Rhodes doesn't want war. Jameson is keeping the telegraph crackling with messages of peace. I lose faith in your vaunted war."

"Today the courier arrived with Lobengula's monthly hundred pounds from Rhodes. Lobengula refused to accept the payment. Can you twist that to mean peace?"

"Don't cheek me, John, or I'll do something unpleasant to you," said Ernst thoughtfully. "So Lobengula has sent back the Company's subsidy!" He let out a bray of amusement. "*Hoivery*, John! That's the end of diplomacy."

"Which is why I said patience, patience," Jacobs told him. "Let the war begin; let these bloody Kaffirs put their minds to killing; let the old hippo drive the English or be driven; we'll be ready whichever way the locust hops, eh?"

"*Saluut*, John."

"*Saluut, meneer*," said Jacobs, returning his toast with satisfaction.

Maria was leaning against the plastered wall of the hut. She felt sickened, poisoned by what she had heard. All he had said after the fight, and later denied, was true. Her husband, her beautiful peerless Ernst Prinsloo, was as foul as a man could be, damned so by himself while quite sober.

He was twice a traitor—to his employer, Rhodes, for whom he had obviously no loyalty, and again to Lobengula, who had always treated him kindly. He had laid plans to steal an enormous fortune, not recklessly on the spur of the moment, for which she might have forgiven him, but over what must have been a long period; and as associate he had taken the repulsive ex-convict, the sneaking little wretch Jacobs, the scum of Africa. Together they were hoping for, perhaps even intriguing for, a terrible war in which thousands might die.

She heard Jacobs say: "Listen, was that a noise outside?" Turning, she ran towards the stable and felt her way to Bomvu's stall.

Outside, Ernst called: "Who is in there?"

It had been irrational to dive into the stable. Now they would pull her out, be astonished, demand explanations—and she knew that despite their own guilt, she would feel like the culprit, and behave weakly.

Taking a long breath, she summoned up her moral strength, which was considerable. She had to face him now. It wouldn't have helped to postpone it anyway. What she had heard him say would not change or cease to be, not in an hour, nor ever.

She was ready to move forward when across the grey shadow of the doorway there moved the indistinct figure of a man. He had been in there before her.

"Who is in there?" Ernst repeated.

"Who the hell do you think?" asked a truculent voice. It was Gabe Decker. She heard him say: "My gun's on your gut, Ernie; don't have any sudden urges to jump me."

SHE was conscious of a stunning sense of deliverance. It was almost as positive a relief to find him here as it had been that night in Victoria when he'd rescued her from the warrior.

Ernst said: "You'd better give your revolver to John, my friend, or he'll shoot you with that rifle two feet from your ear——"

"If you shoot me, Jacobs, I shoot Ernie," said Gabe coolly. "I just came to return his horse."

Ernst said sarcastically: "He's in the stable this minute, I suppose?"

"He is."

"Then I'll go and see——"

"Stand still," said Gabe. "I don't trust your freaky."

"So I can't prove your story."

"Take my word." Decker spat. "Damn if I can figure how we break

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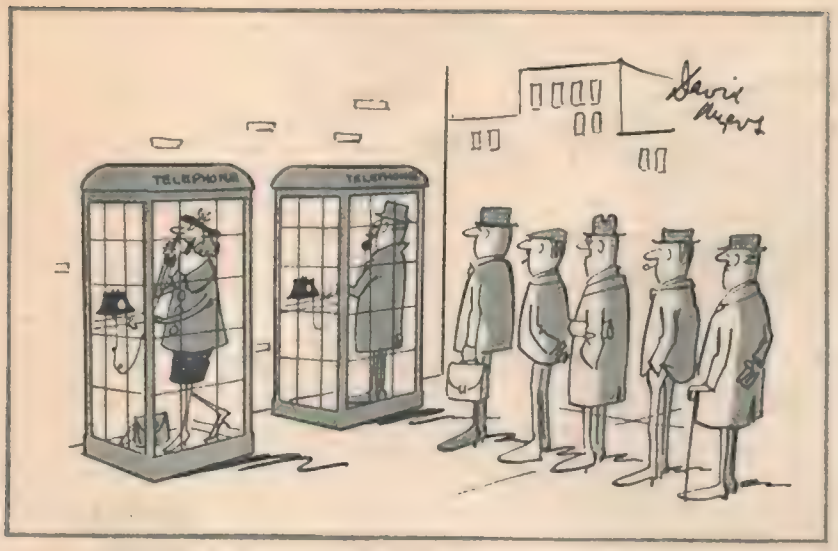


this up, unless I just blast both of you."

The two men would take that for the wryly humorous remark of a fellow who saw he was beaten. Maria did not, for she knew Decker. With Jacobs's rifle at his head, believing that he was likely to be shot, he was capable of taking a calculated risk, firing at Ernst and then trying for Jacobs before the half-breed could twitch his trigger.

RELUCTANTLY she stepped out of the doorway, to press the muzzle of her pistol against the back of the man whom she had only so recently welcomed to her heart as an ally. "Gabe," she said, choking with sorrow, "please give me your gun."

Decker reflected briefly, then holstered the Colt. "Put up that blowpipe," he said to Jacobs. "I don't see what all the fuss is about. I only brought back a horse."

"We'll verify that," said Prinsloo, moving past him.

The touch of the gun at Gabe's spine was gone. Maria had stepped out beside them. She wore her jacket over a white petticoat sort of thing that must be as poor a protection from the night chill as Gabe's leopard tails. She said nothing, but held the gun ready.

"You brought back Isitwatwa," said Ernst, coming from the stable.

"I said so."

"And for a present, or payment for his use, you brought me a saddle. Which was once, of course, mine. But I don't understand why you went to the trouble of putting it on my other horse, Geel." Ernst grinned bleakly at Decker. "I wonder if Lobengula would object to my shooting you," he murmured. "A horse thief, caught in the act. I might not have recognized you without your captain's plumes, eh? Regrettable."

"There was no light, you couldn't have known him," said Jacobs eagerly. "I was with you. I can swear to it."

"Ernst, if you shoot him, I'll kill you."

The blue eyes shifted to Maria. "What is this renegade to you?" he asked quietly. "And where did you appear from just now? I have begun to think——"

"Murder is even worse than stealing," she said. "I'm against both. I thought you were."

"Certainly I am," said Prinsloo heartily. "I was simply having a joke at his expense." He scratched his yellow beard. "John, suppose you post yourself in the stable. And take care to fire at anyone who comes in before dawn, eh? I will be out here somewhere, roaming with my elephant gun. Where there is one horse thief there may be others." He took Maria by the arm. "Come, dearest, you must go back to bed."

She walked off with him. Jacobs picked up the lantern and backed into the stable, the rifle trained dead on Gabe's chest. *"Nag, Meneer neger kaptein,"* he said impudently; "Good night, Mr. Matabele captain."

"Wait a minute," said Decker. He was thinking double-quick. "I want a word with you."

"Why should I speak with you, you white dog?" said Jacobs with vast suspicion.

DECKER said: "Because I can make you a rich man." It went against his grain to oil up this bootlicker. The alternatives seemed to be either to jump him and be shot for certain, or else give up, and be as good as dead. He thought of the bound guards, the biscuit tin of diamonds missing from the king's wagon. Sweat ran down his face.

"How would you do that?" Jacobs was saying.

"With more diamonds than you ever saw."

Jacobs's eyes widened. "And what do I do for them?"

"Join forces with me. We'll take two horses and be——" He stopped and turned his head. He had heard Prinsloo coming. "Aim your rifle at him and you're in for half," he said hastily.

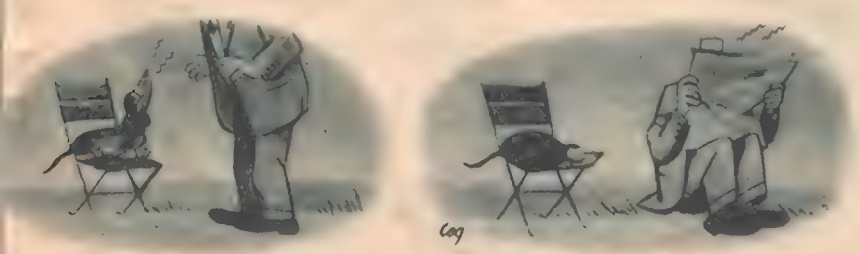
The half-breed shook his head. "Not on a slim promise like that, *kaptein*. I'll speak with you again tomorrow."

"Tomorrow's too late," hissed Decker furiously.

"Then I will die a poor man," said Jacobs, smirking in his face. "Here is my friend, who owns the horses." Ernst had stopped behind Decker. "The *kaptein* was begging for his saddle, or rather your saddle," said Jacobs glibly.

"To hell with you," said Prinsloo to Decker. "You leave with what little you're wearing, and lucky to have that. Look here," he said, tapping Decker's back with the barrel of a big sporting rifle, "why did you bring Isitwatwa to exchange for Geel?"

Gabe did not lie, because Ernst could easily check on it; besides, the



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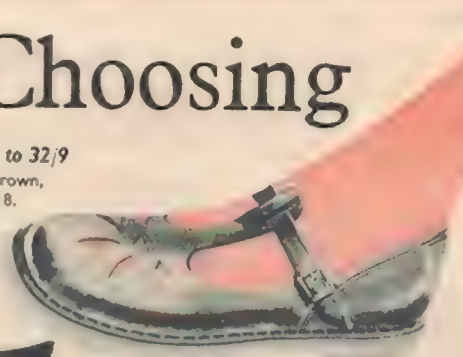

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Earthshaker

continued from previous page

poor nag ought to be vetted. "He's got a sprain of the off foreleg. And I need a horse. Don't prod me with that thing. I don't like it." He stared up at Ernst, who stepped back a pace.

"When did he sprain it?"

"An hour ago. Maybe less."

"Very well, I'll see to it. First you get out of here." He motioned with the gun. "After you've gone, I'll fire at anything moving among the huts. Understood?" Gabe nodded. "And if you come prowling any other night, I won't warn you before I shoot," said Prinsloo heavily. "A Boer's horses and guns and money—and his wife—cannot be stolen with impunity."

Decker stood up. "I'm not after your wife or your guns, or your stinkin' money. One of these days you'll be missing a horse, though."

Prinsloo laughed. Jacobs said mockingly: "Farewell, *kaptein*."

Decker looked at the breed. "Call me Gabe," he said, and whirled around on his heel and departed.

Not far from the reed paling around the huts, about as far as a man with a cheekful of plug tobacco could spit, Decker had piled his gear. Deadhead was lying on top of it. He sat down beside her, put his hand on her domed skull, and digested his circumstances.

He had four hours till dawn, or less. To start out impulsively on foot would give him, say, one chance in a hundred of escape; he considered this thoroughly and rejected it. Mounted, he'd have at least an even break.

He waited to see what Prinsloo would do. If the big oaf went to bed, Decker could handle Jacobs all right.

Presently he saw the glow of a kerosene lamp; then in a minute another, at some distance from the first. He scowled. A third was lit, close to the fence. He risked discovery by standing. The lamps had been set on the ground between the huts. As he watched, a fourth yellow-white flickering appeared, its source hidden by a shed.

"Are you there, horse thief?" Prinsloo called over the fence. "I've brightened the place so you won't stumble when you come in."

Decker cursed angrily. He was outfoxed and he knew it. He thumbed up his Stetson. "Don't know but what we'll have to take it all back," he said almost carelessly. "Never mind, there's always a second chance."

Lifting the saddlebags by their leather yoke, he trudged off towards the kraal. His mind jumped from point to point. He was afraid that in the welter of problems he might miss something essential to his safety.

Go in the gate—*if those men ain't been spotted*—shuck this load, sneak into the king's yard again—*if that watch is as careless as ever*—put the diamonds in the safe—*if you can find the can, if the safe didn't lock when you shut it, if the king's asleep*—get back to the hut, clean up, wait for morning.

That was a year's supply of *ifs*, even for a fellow with destiny on his side. And there were more. Tomorrow he had to corner Jacobs and enlist him as a colleague.

That shouldn't be too hard; some of the arguments he'd use occurred to Decker instantly.

He located the empty can, added it to his load, and went staggering up the slope. No sound came from beyond the gate. That was a good sign. He walked straight up to it and looked in. The fire had shrunk to embers. Both sentinels had come out of their stupor; one had rolled on his face and was thrashing vigorously.

Decker took time off to repeat his head-knocking performance and passed on to his hut. Quickly shedding his load, he poured the diamonds back into their can and dived out of the hut.

And now the luck ran perilously low.

Not only were all four warriors awake at the second gate, they were talking with the king himself. That great black figure bolt upright in the doorway was like a concentration of all the hosts of this black land that opposed Decker.

Crouching in the darkness beyond the fire's limit, the white man began to tremble. They weren't talking about the theft—the conversation was too calm—but Decker could not take a chance on waiting to find out what the topic was; at any moment Lobengula might order the kraal wakened, to hear a proclamation or to go on the warpath, for any reason whatever.

He turned and scuttled away as close to panic as he had ever been. He did the first thing that came into his mind. He rabbited back to the outer gate and set the four-gallon can on the earth between the unconscious sentries, then dashed at full speed for his hut.

If he could get himself cleaned up, he might be safe. For a time he might be safe. Should Jacobs take it into his head thereafter to be shortsighted, imprudent, or stubborn, then Decker would surely die; and the fact that he had been for a few hours one of the richest men in Africa would not console him much.

All the *impis* were gathered on the dancing ground for a ceremony of great importance. Two warriors had been found tied up by the kraal gate with a tin of diamonds between them. As it had plainly been done by witchcraft, there was a levee at which those guilty of casting the enchantment would be smelled out.

The king sat in his chair on a hump of pounded dirt in the shade of the fence. The witch-doctors cast themselves before him, thin, wicked old men appearing from nowhere as though they had been pitchforked headlong out of hell.

"Smell them out," said Lobengula.

The doctors began to run back and forth along the packed lines of warriors. Some pranced and capered like

---

COLOUR—2

The purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love colour the most.

John Ruskin

The Inspector's comment

See page 14

The vital clue, it seems to me, was provided in the neighbour's evidence. According to his story, the girl ran downstairs crying, "Oh, it is terrible. She is dead. She is dead. You said you would not touch her." She claimed later that she thought she was addressing Dupont. But she had spoken *in English*—and to the Duponts she spoke only French. Isn't it more likely that she expected to find an Englishman? An Englishman who couldn't afford to marry her—but would have been able to—with the Dupont jewels? An Englishman who had promised not to "touch" Madame Dupont, but had done so, fatally, when she screamed? Take in the girl and Lipton.

wildebeeste; others mimicked baboons.

"*Nankuyana,*" shrieked one of them, "there he is yonder, the chief of the ten evildoers," and bounded towards a group of indunas and captains, then paused and laughed. "No, no, let him wait," he cried, "I will smell him last of all."

SEVERAL indunas wet their lips nervously, and some of the captains frowned, wondering if they had offended Lobengula in any way; for the smelling-out rite was often the instrument of his ill will as well as of his justice.

Dakwa, the white captain, stood among them. They looked at him, speculating. Was it Dakwa who had put a spell on the two warriors, and spirited the royal diamonds out of the sacred wagon? Several captains shuffled farther from him, and even his friend Manyao turned his face away and pretended not to know him.

Casting up and down the ranks, their nostrils expanding in dramatic snuffles, the witch-doctors chose their victims one by one. "*Nanku!*" they yelped, again and again. "Here he is, here he is, another man who does not love the Black Calf!" Those who were pointed out were dragged at once from their places, flung down in front of Lobengula, and at a signal from him, were beaten to death with knobkerries.

Lobengula watched the pitiless red ritual, occasionally smiling, nodding, sipping daintily at his morning's beer.

"*Igazi, igazi, igazi,*" chanted the men of his armies. "Blood, blood!"

Nine men were smelled out and executed. Now the pack of sorcerers came leaping towards the headmen. The leader dived suddenly among the captains to push his flat nose against each in turn. When he came to the white man he stopped dead. Stagily he worked his nostrils in and out, his head weaving before Dakwa's.

He fell prostrate and sniffed at his feet, leaped up again to grip Dakwa by the shoulder and shoved his nose almost between the white man's lips.

Dakwa, otherwise motionless, was seen to raise one eyebrow.

The witch-doctor fell back, hugged himself and roared with triumph, then threw out an arm, the forefinger rigid. The man to whom he pointed was gripped and jerked forward to the place of killing. It was a captain who had been standing at Dakwa's right hand.

The witch-doctor, ecstatic over his terrifying joke, thumped Dakwa on the chest, spattering him with gobbets of dead man's brains. "*Ehe,* white man. You stink, but it is only your natural stench. It is not of evil," he said happily. "I was nearly tricked by it. But I am not a novice, I cannot be misled even by the stink of white skin."

He grinned, a new thought presenting itself to him. "If you pay me a heifer, or eight goats, I will give you a powerful medicine that will make you smell sweetly of flowers," he said in Dakwa's ear.

The white captain murmured something which he took for agreement. He whipped round and pranced towards the heap of corpses.

"We have smelled out the enemies of the Black Bull. Ten men who conspired against you, Lord. Shall we smell out more? Shall we wear away the morning in discovery of those who hate the king?"

"It is enough," said Lobengula. "Let the *impis* disperse. And let Manyao and the white captain, Dakwa, come sit by me, for I have orders for them."

Trampling the stony-hard earth of the dancing ground so that it shivered beneath them, the regiments passed in orderly files to their various duties and diversions; while Dakwa and the induna pushed their way to the king's great chair.

DECKER was handed a pannikin of beer, and gulped it thankfully, trying his best to stop trembling.

The king was speaking to Manyao. Decker still hadn't caught the trick of winnowing the kraal racket for one particular voice, but he knew by glance and motion that Lobengula was talking about him.

"Is say Manyao go home to Enxa kraal," bellowed the old induna in Decker's ear. "Is say Dakwa go too."

"But I'm teaching his men to

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MARTINI

Sweet or Dry

"Did your mother ever do *this*?"

Earthshaker

continued from previous page

shoot!" exclaimed Decker indignantly.

"*M'nengi, m'nengi* men at Enxa kraal, Dakwa. You teach them guns, I teach you Sindebele. Is want you speak it good."

Decker stared at Manyao. "Dog my everlasting cats," he said slowly, "of all the lordamercy luck!" He knew it would be useless to complain. "How long have I got?" he asked.

"*Katesi!*"

"Right away," said Decker, and if he'd a crumb of humour in him at the moment, he would have chuckled at the gloomy resignation in his own voice.

DECKER salaamed to Lobengula, and walked to his hut. He had been there there only an instant when a young man ran to the door and kneeled. "*Ngingwako, inkosi.*"

"You are my boy?" repeated Decker.

"Yes, master. I come from the Black Bull, who gives me to you."

"How much can you carry?"

"As much as your *ibiza,* master," said the youth proudly.

"Yes . . . I wonder what everybody thinks happened to that horse, anyway," said Decker in English.

The bearer was a gift worth having. He loaded up the fellow with blanket roll and saddlebags, and put a rifle into each of his hands.

He strapped on the rucksack himself, because his ammunition and cigars were in it; and slung the shotgun over his own shoulder.

Then he beckoned to the boy and went out of the hut, the red bitch following.

The men of Manyao's kraal were already marshalled by the gate. Manyao waved cheerfully from the head of his troop. Decker joined him there.

"*Hamba guhle,*" cried the women of the kraal, as the line of warriors swung out from Bulawayo. "Walk well, walk sweetly!"

And so they marched down the slope and across the flat, Manyao and his white captain in the van, until the file came abreast of the Prinsloo establishment.

Ernst and the half-breed stood by the fence. Maria was not in sight. "Damn," said Decker, and stared at Jacobs very hard. The brown man said something to Prinsloo and came trotting towards them.

"*Meneer* sends you his greetings, horse thief," he bawled; and having reached the American, fell into step beside him, skipping to match the long Matabele stride. "You are leaving?" he asked Decker. "You agreed that we were to speak together, *kaptein.*"

"We can talk now, if the Boer won't get suspicious."

"I'll tell him I was insulting you horribly," said Jacobs, laughing. The *impi* began to chant a marching song. Manyao could not hear Decker and the breed because of it. "You were going to make me rich," said Jacobs.

"That's right. If you'd trusted me last night, we'd be fifty miles away with our pockets crammed with diamonds."

"I could not trust a man I didn't know," Jacobs said, hopping energetically. "You may be as great a liar as I am."

Decker told him briefly what he had done the night before. "I'm trustin' you because I think I can," he said. There was no more flattering speech he could have uttered; Jacobs smirked with pleasure. "When I was sittin' there arguing for a horse, I had a whole can of diamonds twenty feet away."

Decker described how he had crept into the king's wagons. "My God," said Jacobs, plainly in awe of him. "You must move like a black mamba. You are surely the only man who ever did such a thing and lived ten minutes."

"Don't worry, I can do it again."

Jacobs looked at him reverently. "Why are you telling me this, sir? It seems you don't need me at all. Not that I'm not eager to serve you," he exclaimed hastily, "but you are putting your life in my hands without need."

"Look," said Decker, "I carried away one measly can of the things. Two men could take three or four times as much, because we could lift one of those safes together, and we'd have a horse fitted with a rig to carry it. Don't that make sense, John?"

"Oh yes—Gabe," said the thin man hesitantly, "but I can't *sluip* about like you."

GABE said: "I'll teach you. When I come back, I'll show you how to move Indian. I can do it, if you ain't cursed with two left feet."

"*Alvader!* Now I'm glad we didn't join forces last night. We'll clean him out, the fat lard-guts. And that mighty ape of a Prinsloo, we'll swindle him! I can help you get all three of his horses."

He put out his hand, and Gabe shook it reluctantly. "So long, partner."

"*Tot siens, kaptein.*" He fell back, waving. Gabe fished in his rucksack and found a cigar. The men of Manyao sang their contented way towards the distant Enxa kraal, led by the only Matabele captain in history ever to smoke a four-shilling Havana on the march.

© *Robert Krepps, 1958*

NEXT WEEK: Decker goes to war—against the white men

Monte Carlo fraud

continued from page 6

nerves, for the thought images conjured up by oil wells were almost too much for him.

"Tell me, monsieur," continued Mary, destroying whatever was left of the poor man's critical faculties, "tell me something I am curious to know . . . whether at any time you have done my husband some great injury? Otherwise, I do not understand how a man of his talents and high reputation could stoop *for that woman's sake* to such infamy. . . ."

"No, madame, never! That I swear by all I hold most holy. . . ."

"Ah, I thought not. She must have bewitched him. For me it is the end. Tomorrow . . . tomorrow I shall leave him. I was poor before and I would rather be poor again than endure this bitter humiliation. . . ."

"Madame's noble sentiments do her credit," said Morosco, who by this time was chattering with excitement. "But why, madame, will you tell me, does Monsieur Lawson offer me fifty thousand dollars for the contents of the galleries?"

"He offers you the paltry sum of fifty thousand dollars for the contents of the galleries when one picture alone. . . ."

"Yes, madame . . . ?"

"How low will a man sink in order to impress a woman with his astuteness? I fear, monsieur, that you must regard me as indiscreet and, worse, disloyal . . . but you do not know what

COLOUR—3

Of all colours, brown is the most satisfying. It is the deep, fertile tint of the earth itself; it lies hidden beneath every field and garden; and it is the garment of multitudes of earth's children, from the mouse to the eagle.

Mary Webb

I have suffered. Do not think too hardly of me, monsieur. Forget what I have told you . . . tomorrow I shall have gone."

Mary rose as though to leave. This, as she knew, was the moment . . . the climax . . . the prelude to the pay-off. She said: "If you are foolish enough to accept my husband's cheque for fifty thousand dollars, Monsieur Morosco, I will tell you what he will do. He will take off the walls of the galleries three pictures . . . three pictures only. He will make you a present of the rest and laugh in your face as he walks out."

"Madame spoke of being poor," said the other softly. "If madame will permit, I would like to offer her some token . . . some tangible token of my eternal gratitude."

"I do not seek to profit by my husband's perfidy, monsieur," said Mary, drawing herself up.

"I do not need madame's assurance of this. Nevertheless, it will be a great pleasure to be of some assistance and, if madame feels under any sense of obligation, she may rid herself of it by telling me which three pictures he would remove. . . ."

"Since you make the offer thus delicately, monsieur. I will accept your help. With a small sum . . . even so small as ten thousand dollars . . . I shall go to the other side of the world and make a fresh start. . . ."

On the short drive to the Morosco Fine Art Galleries, their owner ignored the speed limit. On arrival there, with a splendid gesture of defiance, he tore off the seal on the door. From the safe he drew a thick package of currency, which he held suggestively in Mary's full view.

Mary already knew the general descriptions of the "reputed" Rembrandt, Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec, knew also that they were hanging on the same wall and were all three clearly visible from the street. As she pointed them out to Morosco he was so grateful that he did not even remark the swiftness with which the pile of currency disappeared, or the click of the door as Mary left.

She knew from experience there was no time to lose. Back at the hotel she paid the bill—the bags were already packed—and told a porter to put them in the car.

She found Peter and La Gobolinsky in the Casino bar. This was the moment for shock tactics. La Gobolinsky looked up with a haughty who-is-this-woman? look, directed proprietorially at Peter.

"Peter, darling," said Mary sweetly, "you know how I hate to interrupt a business talk, but I thought you would like to know that two people were inquiring for you at the hotel a few moments ago. They seemed . . . angry."

"Who were they, my pet?"

"People I'd never heard of, darling . . . a Princess Golobinsky and a picture dealer called Morosco. Do the names mean anything to you?"

The names meant something to La Gobolinsky, who grabbed her bag and left the bar.

"She seems in a hurry, doesn't she?" remarked Mary. "And you know, darling, something tells me we shouldn't waste time. Our bags are in the car . . . let's go."

"Darling," said Mary some forty minutes later, when they were over the Italian border, "how much would your cut have been if it had all worked out as you hoped?"

"Two or three thousand pounds . . . why?"

"It's much better to be honest, Peter, truly it is," said Mary dreamily.

"How do you work that out?" Peter wanted to know. "Which reminds me . . . how did you pay that hotel bill?"

"Out of the ten thousand dollars Monsieur Morosco paid me, of course."

He stared at her. "He paid you ten thousand dollars? What for?"

"For tipping him off that those three pictures of his were the real thing, of course, and warning him that you and that woman whose pools of mystery you seem to find so interesting were trying to put a swift one over him by buying them from him for less than their value. He was most grateful."

"Darling!" exclaimed Peter delightedly. "Then you're not reformed any more . . . ?"

"Of course I'm reformed," snapped Mary. "It's just that I'm . . . well, I'm trying not to be bigoted about it. . . . Keep to the right side of the road, darling, we nearly hit that last car."

THE END

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NEXT WEEK'S STORIES

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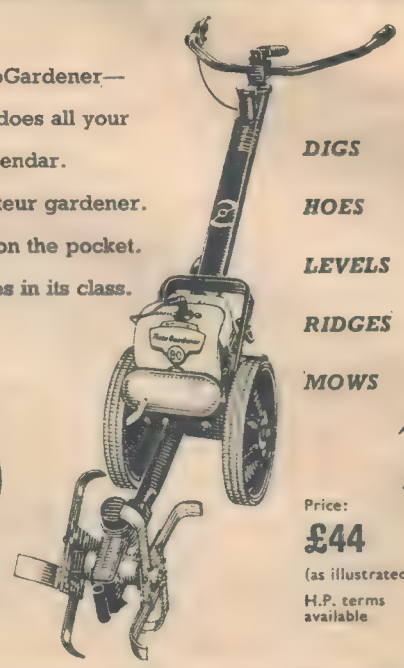

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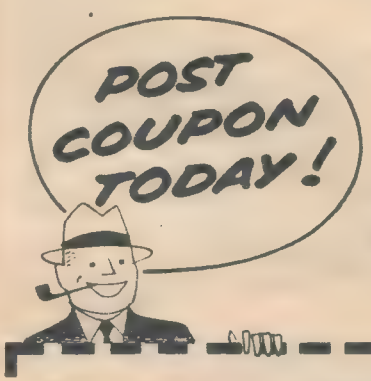

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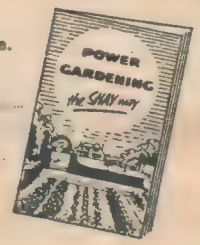

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The rebel baron

continued from page 8

able to walk round the garden. I did that once or twice."

"What? Slept in Buckingham Palace?"

"Yes. I take back my statement that I've never been in Buckingham Palace. I have indeed, as officer of the guard. I was at Wellington Barracks for four months during which time the Guards' Chapel was blown up by a flying bomb. Direct hit. I was reading the Book of Job in a padded armchair with its back to the window. I would probably have copped it if I'd been sitting the other way round."

We moved on to less dangerous days: Oxford after the war. Surely he had had his little fling there?

Wonderful chance

No, he had wanted to avoid politics at Oxford. He saw it as a wonderful chance to read. He took a Second, and if he'd worked harder in his third year it would have been a First Class degree. He won the Gladstone Memorial Prize. And he helped to form a link between Oxford and a French university.

It all sounded too conformist. Was he never in *any* scrapes there?

"No, not. . . ." He stroked his top teeth reflectively. "Well, I got into a slight controversy with the police on Guy Fawkes Night once. But that's not the sort of thing you have in mind."

I said that it might be.

"Well, actually, I like to think I revived the celebration of Guy Fawkes Night at Oxford. It didn't happen during the war and for the first two or three years afterwards things were very dull. But in my third year we did jazz it up. Letting off squibs. Took me into custody. Some nonsense about a helmet."

"You knocked one off?"

"Well, yes. While I was at the station a very nice policeman came and said how very glad he was that Guy Fawkes Night had started up again. Things had been so dull."

Did he regard his education generally as a good one?

"I was lucky at Eton. I had an outstandingly good housemaster. But for that accident I would not have benefited greatly. Oxford I benefited from very greatly."

Why, then, was he against Prince Charles having that sort of education?

"Think of the harm done by the public schools kind of segregation on class lines. If his function is to symbolize the unity of society a public school education for a future king would be disastrous. And if he is to symbolize the brotherhood of the Commonwealth his education should not be based on one country. It's a pity now that he's in a class school. A state primary school would have been better. For the second phase of his education it would be better for him to go out of the United Kingdom —Canada, Australia."

It was time to go. Lord Altrincham had a date in the City. While he went to wash his hands I looked again at those paintings, especially the Gowing.

"Like it?" asked His Lordship on his return.

"I've been trying to make it out," I said.

"Oh, it reminds me of the sun in an extraordinary way. The sun struggling through thick foliage."

It wasn't quite the way I saw it. But I could understand his interest in it. He offered me a lift. I was going the other way. As he made for a taxi, his polka-dotted silk scarf flying, he looked like any young man in a hurry. Only his envelope-style black hide brief-case set him apart, with its letter A engraved in a top corner. A single, solitary A—in gold, of course. THE END

Tomatoes

continued from page 17

growers and four appointed by the Minister of Agriculture. No grower with a thousand plants or more may sell tomatoes unless he is registered with the board. Those registered, whether voluntarily or not, must pay a levy of 12s. for every five hundred plants.

But the board does not market. Nor does it fix prices, impose standards or buy or sell tomatoes. In 1958 it collected £46,700 from growers. Of this, £15,700 went in salaries and expenses for board members and their staff, and another £3,490 in rent, rates and general accommodation expenses at its Mayfair and Scottish offices. Most of its functions are advisory, and only a tiny proportion of growers can show a return for the money they pay.

The board does not give an outward impression of efficiency. Its offices are dull and gloomy. The nameplate outside is covered with verdigris. When Elliot sent in his list of signatures, the first intimation he had that the board had received it was a report in a trade magazine that a few of the signatures were inadmissible.

Nor have its annual meetings been particularly well run. Once, when the Abolitionists disputed a hand vote on board members' salaries (£23,000 a year between them), a card vote was held. The chairman overruled protests that board members ought not to vote on their own salaries, and announced that the motion had been carried by 5,238 units (of five hundred plants) against 723 units.

After more protests, the board agreed to have the voting checked by arbitrators suggested by the Minister. The arbitrators reported that 3,750 units in favour of the motion were inadmissible because the person who cast them was not a director of his company.

Case of the juice

The board admitted its mistake, but instead of taking another vote it said that there was still a majority in favour of the salaries without the 3,750 inadmissible units. It announced that the decision would stand.

The Abolitionists claim that everything the board has ever done has gone wrong. They cite the case of the tomato juice which chairman Hubert Mizen proudly produced at a growers' meeting.

The board wanted to see if it were possible to relieve the market in times of glut by buying up tomatoes, having them processed and selling them as canned juice. They bought ten tons of tomatoes and tried to sell the juice at between 7½d. and 10d. a tin at a time when a commercial brand was selling at 10½d. But there were few buyers. "We had to dispose of the remainder cheaply," says general manager John Allan. "We lost £200."

The Abolitionists say that this is just another example of the board's ineffectiveness. The board claim that it

THUMBTHING by Stowell

SECRETS OF SOVIET SCIENCE

To Lucien Barnier, Russia's top experts told their sensational plans . . . for robot trains, ships that fly, and a daring trip to Mars and back. His revealing series begins

NEXT WEEK

was a worthwhile experiment which didn't come off.

The board might command more support if it had made the industry prosperous. But since it was set up in 1950, the number of registered growers has dropped from more than 11,000 to 6,352, and the number of acres under glass from 3,246 to 2,342. In the last five years production has dropped from 120,000 tons a year to 103,000.

One reason is a fall in home demand. In 1951, every man, woman and child in Britain ate nearly five ounces of tomatoes every week. Now, we eat barely more than four ounces, though the board has tried to promote sales with advertisements, cookery competitions and exhibitions.

Prices plunged

Imports are the industry's real problem. They account for two-thirds of all the tomatoes we eat. Imports from the Channel Islands and the Canaries have remained fairly steady. But Spain, which had no exports to Britain in 1951, sent us 17,600 tons last year. Over the same period, Dutch imports jumped from 24,000 tons to 34,000 tons, and are likely to rise further. Israel, Turkey, Bulgaria and Malta have also started sending us tomatoes.

The effect of imports on prices was shown dramatically last July. At the peak of home production, a shipment of two thousand tons arrived from Holland. Within a week, the wholesale price dropped from 1s. 5d. to 11d.

Against imports, the board can do nothing. It agrees that the present tariff of 4d. a pound in the summer months does little to keep them out (mainly because production costs are so much cheaper in other countries). But when it supported an application by the National Farmers' Union for an increase of 2d. a pound, the government refused it.

Ironically, the only tomatoes sold in Britain which have not been compulsorily graded are British tomatoes. Although the board suggests standards by which growers can grade their fruit, it cannot compel them to do so.

Nevertheless, the board has powers, which may come into effect if growers decide that they want them, to market, fix prices, process tomatoes, erect packing stations and insist on definite grades. Because of these and other possibilities, the National Farmers' Union opposes the abolition of the board.

"It's easy to destroy a marketing board," says an official, "but hard to get it back again. The board is there and growers could turn it into what they want."

In the poll, the board will probably get its main support from some very large growers whose efficient methods have enabled them to beat foreign competition. They even profit from the difficulties of the rest of the industry.

Some smaller growers will also wish to retain it. It is they who have derived the greatest advantages from it. Every day it sends out 2,500 copies of a market bulletin which enables them to keep in touch with current prices. The charge for this service is 30s. a year. The board also gives free advice on growing and business problems.

Some time ago, it was concerned to find that tomatoes had a low priority at the new Glasshouse Crops Research Institute near Worthing. It paid £5,000 for two glasshouses so that work on tomatoes could start sooner.

The board also fights cases where growers have had their crop damaged by spray from neighbouring farms. It has already recovered £20,000 in damages, and claims totalling another £15,000 await settlement.

The board's opponents admit that these services are useful. But they say that many of them are obtainable elsewhere. The National Agricultural Advisory Service is free to all horticulturists, and the National Farmers' Union will fight spray damage cases. As for tomato research, there are several other stations which are working on the subject.

So, at a time when many of them are losing money, they do not see why they should be forced to pay for services they may not need.

Growers on both sides are divided on what they do want. Some, like Elliot, want higher tariffs on imported tomatoes. Others, like Wright, believe that the industry must lower its costs and raise its efficiency. The government apparently favours the second view. It has allocated £7,500,000 to help the horticultural industry and discussions are taking place between N.F.U. and ministry representatives to decide how it should be spent.

What growers now have to decide is whether the continued existence of the board is likely to help. If they decide that it will, the board has promised to hold a further poll on whether it should fix standards and go into marketing. It has given this pledge only since Elliot's petition.

Of the present scheme, growers should not expect too much.

Hubert Mizen, the board's chairman, says: "Individual growers expected more of the scheme than could be provided by the powers given us. They're looking for the Utopia of a high price, prohibition of imports and a profit in the bag."

THE END

Which year? *see page* 16

All the events took place in 1953—Coronation Year.

COLOUR—4

Blue is always the husband's favourite.

Norman Hartnell

RHEUMATISM

Rheumatic pain can be eased immediately now the new Viodox tablets are available to all . . . through all Chemists. This is a new combination of medicaments resulting from extensive research and development into the relief of rheumatic pain.

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A gracious welcome to your guests

18/- bottle · 9/6 half-bottle

Also Magnums 36/-

So you're never Constipated?

That's what you may think. But do you *really* know the symptoms of constipation? Read this quiz below, and you'll find out.

Have you had any of these warning signs lately?

Loss of appetite ... ... ☐
Bad breath ... ... ☐
Biliousness ... ... ☐
Headaches ... ... ☐
Poor Complexion ... ... ☐
Lassitude ... ... ☐

Two or more ticks, and you probably *are* constipated. But don't risk harsh purgatives. You need Feen-a-Mint, the original, gentle chewing gum laxative with the fresh, minty flavour. Because you chew Feen-a-Mint, the laxative ingredients pass into your system naturally—like food—and gently persuade you back to your normal, healthy routine.

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Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to the "John Bull Illustrated" Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page

We advise . . .

CAN a young person under eighteen enter a public house with his parents to have a drink of lemonade and a game of darts? My son is seventeen and a half and in the forces. I have taken him into licensed premises with the consent of the landlord. Was this illegal?—S. H., Ilkeston, Derby.

● Someone over fourteen can enter licensed premises as long as he or she does not consume alcohol.

Nobody under eighteen can be served with intoxicating liquor, except in the case of licensed premises set aside for the serving of meals. In these, someone over sixteen can be served with beer, porter, cider or perry.

SUE THE P.M.G.

MY son-in-law had his car damaged by a Post Office van which ran into it. The driver admitted responsibility, but the Post Office authorities have refused to meet the claim of £11 10s. The car was not insured comprehensively and the insurance company also refuses to pay for the damage. Is it true that no claim can be made against the Crown under any circumstances?—L. P., Hull.

● The Crown Proceedings Act, 1947, provides for a right of action against any government department.

If, therefore, your son-in-law has evidence to show that the accident was caused through the negligence of the driver of the van, his claim would be against the Postmaster-General.

CRACKS UP TOP

I PURCHASED a new bungalow four months ago and now find that the ceilings are cracking in six places. What action can I take to have these remedied?—R. S. R., Saltcoats, Ayrshire.

● You have a perfect right in normal circumstances to insist that the builder repairs every crack to your satisfaction up to six months after the completion date.

BLOCKED CHIMNEYS

THE previous occupants of my new house must have burned a lot of wood, for the chimneys are caked with a thick tarry soot. Nothing I have tried will remove this soot and a sweep's brush will not go up the chimneys. Is there any other method of removing the soot that I could try?—F. W. T., Bognor Regis.

● As it is obviously very difficult to sweep your chimneys from the fireplace, you will have to have it done from the roof. An electric vacuum sweeper may get better results.

THE WRONG PIECE

SOME weeks ago I purchased a secondhand secretaire from a local furniture shop. Now they say that the wrong one had been delivered. They want to replace it with another one? Are they in the right if they come into my home and remove this piece of furniture? — Mrs. E. P., Wyken, Coventry.

● If a genuine mistake was made, the dealer would be entitled to claim the piece he delivered in return for the piece which you actually bought.

He would have no right to enter your house and take it without your consent, but if you do not permit him to take it, he might sue you for its value.

GARAGE SNAGS?

WHAT are the snags I would encounter in building a garage of concrete blocks? The size I have in mind is about 18 ft. by 9 ft.—R. R. H., Downend, Bristol.

● Your main problems in constructing a garage of concrete blocks are the cost and the weight.

You may be better advised to use breeze blocks, which are made of waste material from steel works and are very strong, light and made in convenient sizes.

The Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London, W.C.1, will be pleased to help you.

ROUGH WEAR

WITH three boisterous children of school age in the house, our carpets wear out in no time. Can you advise me on the best type of floor covering for our living-dining room? The floor itself is wooden, not suitable for staining.—Mrs. J. N., Leicester.

● In these circumstances a suitable floor covering would be cork tiles. With this you would have a very good surface with or without a carpet when the children grow up.

You could write for information to the Armstrong Cork Co., Ltd., 40-44 Wicklow Street, London, W.C.1.

IN OR OUT?

I HAVE taken a mortgage on a house from this month, when the present owner moves out. However, I shall not be occupying it until September and in the meantime it will lie empty, apart from a few pieces of furniture. Will I be liable for rates during this period?—K. A. C., Potters Bar, Middlesex.

● Unless the house is completely empty you will be regarded as being in beneficial occupation and rates will be payable.

This would also apply if the house is occupied by workmen doing repairs or decorations.

TANK ON THE WANE

MY cold water tank is about ten years old and was cleaned out about a year ago. Then there were reddish lumps of deposit on the sides and bottom. Now these are back again. To scrape them off damages the sides of the tank. What is this deposit—and how best can it be treated?—A. N. L., Hendon, London, N.W.4.

● The deposit is almost certainly rust. The cistern should have been galvanized when it was put in. There is nothing you can do about this rust. However, as your tank is gradually dissolving away, would it not be better to replace it now with a galvanized one?

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS
keeps practical homelovers up to date

● **Safe cutting:** Useful and safe in home or workshop, is the Snippy Magic Cutter, which consists of a razor-blade fitted into a plastic holder with a firm fingergrip. It will cut string, paper, leather or buckram. The blade once blunted may be renewed. Price 3s. 11d. by Melody Products (Plastics) Ltd. Generally available.

● **Plugs for walls:** Wall plugs can be quickly made in an emergency by cutting a lead pencil into the required lengths and removing the lead. (Mrs. E. Philip, Loanhead.)

● **New ¼ in. electric drill** which has more power and a higher running speed than the previous model, has now been brought out by Wolf. This Cubmaster model may be used with all existing Wolf Cub attachments without adaptation. A ¼ in. precision chuck is fitted. Price £6 19s. 6d. By Wolf Electric Tools, Ltd., Pioneer Works, Hanger Lane, London, W.5.

● **Paint stripper:** Remove old paint easily with an electric paint stripper such as the Baronet. Designed to blister old paintwork so that it may then be easily scraped off with scraping blades, so making it suitable to use in awkward places. Price 42s. 6d. By Baronet Electrical Developments, 159 Alston Street, Ladywood, Birmingham, 16.

● **Foiled again:** Simplify cleaning by placing a round sheet of aluminium foil inside the deflector plate of the radiant boiling plate of your electric cooker. When spillage occurs, it is a simple matter to remove this foil instead of the more tedious task of removing the burnt stain from the deflector plate. (Mrs. Sussman, Maidstone.)

● **Clean clothes line:** Keep your garden clothes line clean by making a hole in the centre of a small sponge and threading it on to the line. Before hanging clothes, quickly run the sponge along the line. (Mr. J. Palmer, London, W.9.)

* * *

If you have a trouble-saving, money-saving household tip for this column, send it in to Roger Smithells, JOHN BULL ILLUSTRATED, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. One guinea will be paid for each tip published.

£1,500 HOLIDAY GIANT

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LATEST WINNERS

Bullets No. 2,184 Result:

£800 Workshop - plus - Cash Award, or £750 cash: W. E. Platt, 5 Hougoumont Avenue, Waterloo, Liverpool:

In John's Garden—Ads, Ads, Ads—*Sad*!

£50 A. J. Bentley, 6 Tintern House, Augustus Street, London, N.W.1: **Reaching New Heights—World's "Rocket Assisted" *Statesmanship*?**

£25 T. Doyle, 30 Bentley Street, Sutton Manor, St. Helens, Lancs: **The Hungry Machine—"Big Mouth" *Helping* John!**

£10 Mrs. D. T. Emm, 127 Church Street, Wolverton, Bucks: **Useless—"Helmets," If *Juggernauts* Collide!**

£9 H. B. Gelder, "Jasmine," Llandudno Road, Penrhyn Bay, Llandudno: **Reaching New Heights—Crime—Old "Foundations" Sinking?**

£8 F. Ridley, 1 Lindom Avenue, Chester-le-Street: **If You Do It Yourself—Bit "Out"? Lot *In*!**

£7 R. H. Bragg, Urchfont, Dalton-le-Dale, Seaham: **If You Do It Yourself—Without Preaching—*That's* Teaching!**

£6 Mrs. M. L. Medway, 4 Heol Nanteos, Penparcau, Aberystwyth: **Reaching New Heights—Dad's Seeds? In *Treetops*!**

£5 J. H. Dixon, 19 Clarence Road, East Cowes, I.o.W.: **A Present From Moscow—Or Cairo—Nyasaland "Spearhead"?**

£4 W. Kitchen, 1 "Kites Nest," 71 St. Helens Park Road, Hastings: **To Get Through The Uncorrected—Homework—*Teacher's* Dad Helps!**

For ten winners of £3 see *Bullets Bulletin*, 1,600 other Awards have also been posted.

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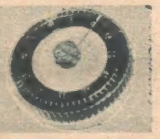

WAY TO WIN

Here's how to shape a Bullet. First, grasp the broad idea by enjoying the latest winners. Then choose as your starting-point any Example from list below. To it, add TWO, THREE or FOUR words to make the whole into a bright Bullet.

The Amazing British	Mysterious Object
Seeds Of Peace	Sound Of The Trumpet
Men, The Sheep	The First Step
To Get A Holiday	Blinding
A Rumbling Volcano	Bit Of Fatherly Advice
Flaw In The System	Modern Artist
Black v. White	He's New To The Job, So
Beneath Sunny Skies	Hobbling About
Gardening Fiend	A State Of Emergency
What Sonny Doesn't Know	What Is Happiness?

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above.

ILike....., But	Somewhere To.....
Going To The.....	When She's Not.....
In The Nurse's.....	As Good As A.....

EXAMPLE ..... 1s. PER BULLET

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Signed.....

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RULES 1. First Prize for best Bullet received; others in order of merit. The test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed at 1s. per Bullet. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated May 23), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, May 9, for early news of No. 2,189 result.)

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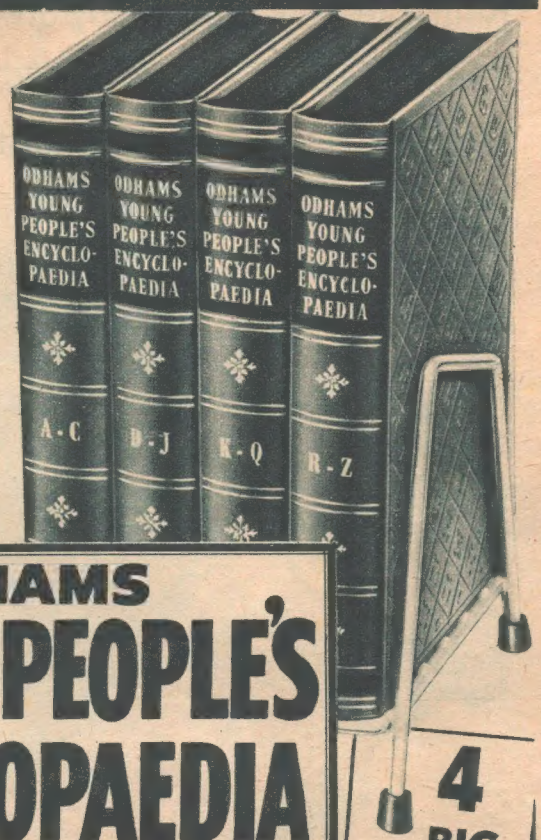

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